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JAMES LEGGE (1815-1897)
AND CHINESE CULTURE:
A MISSIOLOGICAL STUDY IN SCHOLARSHIP,
TRANSLATION AND EVANGELIZATION

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this study is to re-tell the story of a largely neglected figure in the history of Christian missions in China, James Legge (1815-1897), from a modern missiological perspective. As a Scottish missionary from the Congregational (nonconformist) church background, Legge worked for the London Missionary Society in Hong Kong, a British Crown Colony, for almost thirty years. He later became the first Professor of Chinese at the Oxford University and probably the most important sinologist of the nineteenth century.

This study tries to apply the "translation principle" proposed by A. F. Walls to illustrate that the career of Legge in scholarship, translation and evangelization has undergone a process of "conversion" and "transformation" which resulted in Legge's constant revision of his viewpoints on Chinese culture. Legge's genuine appreciation and sympathetic understanding of the Chinese cultural heritage grew gradually and as a "converted" missionary Legge was willing to criticize severely the deed of all "Christian nations". Through the monumental task of translating the Chinese Classics into English, Legge not only served as a bridge-builder between two spheres of culture; he also came to the conclusion that the ancient religion of China was monotheistic and that the teaching of the Chinese sages like Confucius, Mencius, and Lao-tze (Laozi) would suggest valuable lessons to those who claimed themselves as Christians. He also declared that the terms "Shang Ti" (Shangdi) and "T'ien" (Tian) found in the Chinese Classics actually stood for the idea of the one true God in the Christian Scriptures.

Several of Legge's Chinese colleagues like Ho Tsun-shin (1817-1871), Wang Tao (1828-1897), and Hung Jen-kan (1822-1864) were involved in the two way translation of integrating Western ideas into the social, religious, cultural and political scene of nineteenth century China as well as assisting Legge to let the West know more about China. Moreover, though Legge failed to develop any kind of Chinese theology himself, with its emphasis on restoring one's historical past, his legacy still serves to remind the present-day Christians in mainland China and Hong Kong to remember and to revive their own cultural traditions. Along with all the overseas Chinese Christian communities, they have to dig their own wells so as to drink from their own spiritual fountains which would serve as a solid base for a more inculturated and liberating Chinese Christianity.

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FOREWORD

I started this study on the history of Christian missions in China way back in 1987. When I first chose JAMES LEGGE (1815-1897) as the central character of my research at the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World in the University of Edinburgh, I saw him only as one among many interesting Protestant missionaries in the 19th century. However, as time went by, and as events surrounding Hong Kong, China, and Britain unfolding before me, I began to realise the distinction of Legge's contribution in the entire process of the evangelization of China.¹

Furthermore, two incidents in 1989 had a traumatic effect on me and they deeply affected my whole thinking and my approach to this study on Legge. The two incidents were, first, the June 4 event in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. The brutal suppression of the democratic movement has shocked the whole world, especially all the Chinese people who had longed for justice, peace, democracy, and freedom in their homeland. The second incident was the merciless massacre of the Jesuits and

¹ Hong Kong is the birth place of the present writer and the major working field of James Legge in his missionary career.

their fellow lay sisters within the campus of the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Canas on November 16. Though at surface these two events seem to be unrelated and have no direct linkage with the study of Legge, yet to a certain extent such traumatic experience had prolonged my research in many ways. While mourning for those who died and suffered in these two events, I began to reflect on the meaning of "evangelization" in the context of modern-day China in the light of the experience of the Christians in Latin America. At the same time, I decided to go back to Hong Kong to search for an adequate answer to the above issue in the light of 1997, the year that Hong Kong will be returned to China by the British government and also the year that will mark the 100th anniversary of Legge's death!

Moreover, the martyrdom of the Jesuits led my thoughts toward the idea of "INCULTURATED LIBERATION" advocated by the Latin American theologians as the year 1992 reminds again and again the "voice of the victims"!² These voices should never be neglected by all sincere Christian scholars and missionaries. Their struggle for justice, their battle against oppression, and their

² Leonardo Boff and Virgil Elizondo (eds.), *1492-1992: The Voice of the Victims* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990).

longing for freedom should also be the concern for all who are genuinely involved in the present task of evangelization. Evangelization has to be viewed from a different perspective. Therefore I began to re-evaluate Legge's missionary approach from the standpoint of a Chinese Christian who had been brought up within a British colonial setting. In addition, I would like to present my case as someone who supports the democratic movement in China while 1997 would signify a definite change in the socio-economic-political scene in this tiny colony.

May the Lord bless all who stand up for His righteousness and who fight for the actualisation of His kingdom on earth!

"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." JOHN viii:32

INTRODUCTION

A Brief Historical Review

This study is basically centred around the nineteenth century Protestant missionary-sinologue James Legge. Before we focus our attention on this fascinating figure let us take a panoramic view about the historical background preceding Legge's endeavour in the Far East. The Protestant missionary effort in China in the early 19th century never took place in a vacuum. The Christian mission in China already had a long history before the arrival of the first Protestant missionary, Robert Morrison (1782-1834), who set foot on Chinese soil in 1807.¹

¹ The most authoritative account of the history of Christian missions in China up to the mid 1920s is Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China* (London: S. P. C. K., 1929). Another comprehensive work on the subject is Bob Whyte, *Unfinished Encounter: China and Christianity* (London: Collins, 1988), which covers events up to 1987. For post-1989 analysis of the Chinese Church, helpful materials include Tony Lambert, *The Resurrection of the Chinese Church* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1991) and Edmond Tang and Jean-Paul Wiest (eds.) *The Catholic Church in Modern China: Perspective* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993).

From the records that have survived, we can trace the effort of evangelising the Middle Kingdom way back to the 7th century, at the period of the Tang Dynasty. The "Nestorian" missionaries have left us the famous tablet set up in 781 which was re-discovered by the Roman Catholic missionaries in the late Ming Dynasty. The "Nestorian" tradition, representing the great Eastern missionary church, flourished for some two hundred years in China from the 7th to the 9th century, and later prospered once again under the Mongol rulers in the 13th century. The collapse of the Mongol rule was followed by the decline of Nestorian Christianity in China.²

While "the church on fire"³ from the East suffered and faded generally as the merciless Tamerlane (1336-1405) tried to wipe away all non-allies in different

² Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, Chapter IV and V, pp. 46-77.

Other works that touch on the Nestorians in China include A. C. Moule, *Christianity in China Before the Year 1550* (London: S. P. C. K., 1930); Denis Hickley, *The First Christians of China: An Outline History and Some Considerations Concerning the Nestorians in China during the Tang Dynasty* (London: China Study Project, 1980); Lee Shiu-keung, *The Cross and the Lotus* (Hong Kong: Christian Study Centre, 1971).

³ John Stewart, *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise: the Story of a Church on Fire* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1928), chapter VII of this book is "Nestorian Sino-Syriac Monument at Hsi-an-fu and the spread of Christianity in China and Japan", pp. 167-196.

parts of Asia, one must not ignore the fact that missionaries from the Latin West had already reached China and set up bases in Khanbalig (now Beijing), the capital of the Mongol emperor in China by the 13th century. The Franciscan mission under the leadership of John of Monte Corvino (c.1247-1328), had initial success in preaching the gospel to the Mongols.⁴ The friars also in some way collided with the existing Nestorian Christians in China, marking further clashes between the Western Church and the Eastern Church in the field of mission where unity and harmony should be advocated.⁵

⁴ Christopher Dawson (ed.) *The Mongol Mission: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and in China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1955), especially "Introduction", xxxi-xxxv. Cf. also K. S. Latourette, *ibid.*, pp. 68-72; Stephen Neil, *A History of Christian Missions* (Penguin Books, 1986), pp. 107-108.

⁵ John of Monte Corvino once charged the Nestorians in China under the Mongol rule as follow:

... However the Nestorians, who call themselves Christians, but behave in a very unchristian manner, have grown so strong in these parts that they did not allow any Christian of another rite to have any place of worship, however small, nor to preach any doctrine but their own. For these lands have been reached by any apostle or disciple of the apostles and so the aforesaid Nestorians both directly and by the bribery of others have brought most grievous persecutions upon me, declaring that I was not sent by the Lord Pope, but that I was a spy, a magician and a deceiver of men. ...

Unfortunately the Franciscans' effort also met the same fate as the Nestorian Christians during the change of dynastic rule in the mid-14th century.⁶

As the Ming Dynasty turned to a "closed-door" policy towards foreigners, the brilliant Jesuits under the spirit of St. Francis Xavier (1505-1552), the administrative talent of Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606) and the genius of Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), succeeded in entering China and re-established the Roman Catholic tradition in the Celestial Empire. The Jesuits not only survived the fall of the Ming Dynasty, they even gained a very high reputation in the Qing court, especially during the reign of Kangxi (1662-1722), though they still had to face severe persecutions under several occasions. The Chinese Rites controversy which lasted for more than a hundred years ruined the efforts of the Jesuits but the Roman Catholic community established by them and by the friars throughout China has never been extinguished.⁷

A letter dated January 8, 1305 by John of Monte Corvino. Cf. Christopher Dawson (ed.), *ibid.*, p. 224.

⁶ Christopher Dawson (ed.), *ibid.*, xxxiv-xxxv. Cf. Latourette, *ibid.*, pp. 73-77.

⁷ Besides Vincent Cronin's popular account of Matteo Ricci's life, *The Wise Man From the West* (London: Collins, 1984), George Dunne, *Generation of Giants* (London: Burn and Dates, 1962) and Arnold H. Rowbotham, *Missionary and Mandarin* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1942) are

There were already a substantial number of Roman Catholic Christians in China when Morrison reached Guangzhou on September 7, 1807.⁸

Robert Morrison, a London Missionary Society (LMS) worker, was the pioneer among the Protestant missionaries who hoped to evangelize China.⁹ It seems that from Morrison onwards, Protestant missionaries from Britain and America showed little concern about the past history of Christian mission in China and learned almost nothing from the errors and mistakes of their forerunners both from the Latin Western tradition and the forgotten Oriental Christians. Furthermore, many of them could not avoid the disastrous mingling with the Western

very useful in understanding the Roman Catholic missions in China at that period. Cf. Latourette, *ibid.*, pp. 78-198, also Bob Whyte, *ibid.*, pp. 49-92.

⁸ The figures provided by Latourette on Catholic converts around the beginning of the nineteenth century would be about two hundred or two hundred and fifty thousand, *ibid.*, pp. 182-183. Latourette also claimed that Christians were apparently to be found in most of the provinces in China.

⁹ Biographies of Robert Morrison include: Marshall Broomhall, *Robert Morrison, A Master-Builder* (London: SCM, 1927); Ernest H. Hayes, *Robert Morrison: China's Pioneer* (London: The National Sunday School Union, 1925); William John Townsend, *Robert Morrison, The Pioneer of Chinese Missions* (London: S. W. Patridge and Co., 1888).

Probably the earliest biography of Morrison should be the one compiled by his wife, Elizabeth Morrison, *Memoirs of the life and labour of Robert Morrison, D.D.* (London: Longmans, 1839).

imperialistic expansion of the day in many parts of the world. Therefore a new chapter in the history of evangelization of China became an ill-omened one when China was forced to open to the West as well as to these Western missionaries coming under the umbrella of powerful gunboats and artillery.¹⁰

Hong Kong was ceded to Britain as the result of the infamous Opium War (1839-1842) and later incidentally became one of the major bases for missionary work in China. James Legge enters our story right at this momentous period. Therefore it would be extremely difficult to separate his missionary work from the entwined relationships between China, Britain and Hong Kong.

¹⁰ Stuart Creighton Miller, "Ends and Means: Missionary Justification of Force in Nineteenth Century China", in John King Fairbank (ed.) *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1974). Missionaries on the spot simply accepted that the Opium War was an event which would ultimately bring good out of evil. A medical missionary, J. G. Kerr (1824-1901) of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, was angered by the legitimization of opium in the treaty between Britain and China in 1858. He called it "a disgrace not only to the nation that brought it about but to all of Christendom". But then he added, "Nevertheless God can make the calamities of war and all the evils growing out of it to work together for the accomplishment of His own gracious purposes of mercy to our fallen race". Cf. Stuart Creighton Miller, *ibid.*, p. 262.

James Legge, though beginning his missionary career in Malacca, made the decisive move to relocate the LMS mission started by Morrison and his colleague William Milne (1785-1822) from Malacca to Hong Kong. He remained in this British colony for 30 years. In the following chapters we shall take a close scrutiny to see in what way he was successful and in which areas he has shown the common mistakes of his age as a missionary. Apart from these, the present writer will try to stress why he should be remembered and honoured when we talk about Christian mission in China in that epic "Great Century" and will also point out the relevance of his missionary approach in the present era while re-evaluating his approach in the context of modern-day China, especially after the June 4 event.

Lessons From the Past

There are several key issues associated with the effort of evangelising China. From the experiences of the Nestorian and Franciscan missionaries, the problem of "foreignness" of the Christian faith in the midst of the Chinese people must not be disregarded. Christian faith has to find her own way to be deeply rooted in Chinese soil. Such attempts have never stopped since the days of the Nestorian mission. However, it is highly possible that the majority of Christian converts during the Tang and Yuan Dynasty were non-Han people. Though the effort

of "indigenization" could be traced from the records left by these earlier missions, it would be difficult to assert that the attempt is successful.¹¹ Additionally, one can also say that the importation of Christianity into the Chinese Empire basically required good relationships between the Chinese court and all these foreign missionaries, no matter whether from Syria or from Rome.¹²

Nevertheless, one interesting thing to note in the account of the Nestorian tablet unearthed in Xian in 1625 is that it recorded some of the work done by the Nestorian monks. It states that,

*The hungry come and are fed; the cold come and
are clothed;
the sick are cured and restored to health;*

¹¹ Latourette, *ibid.*, pp. 74-76; cf. Bob White, *ibid.*, pp. 38-39, 42, 47; cf. Jean-Paul Wiest, "Learning from the Missionary Past" in *The Catholic Church in Modern China: Perspectives* (edited by Tang and Wiest), especially pp. 185-192.

¹² Whyte emphasizes that the Nestorian mission was free of any association with military and political expansionism, cf. *ibid.*, p. 39. However, the decline of Nestorian mission in China during the Tang Dynasty was partly due to the attack launched by the Emperor Wu Zong on all foreign religions in 845. Again lacking the tolerance of the Mongol court, Nestorian and Catholic communities were scattered when the Mongols were expelled.

James Legge, when discussing the history of Christian missions in China, has touched on this point. His work *The Nestorian Monument of Hsi-an Fu* will be dealt with in later chapters of this thesis.

the dead are buried and laid to rest in their graves.¹³

Though it should not be treated as an exact version of the rallying cry of the modern liberation theologians in Latin America, "the preferential option for the poor",¹⁴ this picture really shows us that Christian faith concerns the whole well-being of human beings. The Gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, is not limited to a purely "spiritual" level in the eyes of these missionary monks from the Eastern Church.

The Jesuits in the 16th and 17th centuries produced a "generation of giants". Besides Xavier, Valignano, and Ricci, names like Michelle Ruggieri (1543-1607), Gulio Aleni (1582-1649), Johann Adam Schall Von Bell (1592-1666), and Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688) should be added to the list of "giants" as they firmly established the Roman Catholic Church in China.¹⁵ Of course one should not

¹³ This translation was from Legge's *Nestorian Monument of Hsi-an Fu*, p. 25.

¹⁴ "The preferential option for the poor" was clearly stated at the Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops held at Puebla, Mexico in 1979. For the major documents related to the subject mentioned, cf. *Puebla: Evangelization at Present and in the Future of Latin America: Conclusions* (Slough: St. Paul Publications and London: C. I. I. R., 1980), especially pp. 178-181.

¹⁵ Apart from the sources mentioned in note 7 of this chapter, see also James Brodrick, *St. Francis Xavier* (New York: Image Books, 1957); Kenneth Scott Latourette, "The Missionary Thinking of Francis

ignore the labour of the friars, both the Franciscans and the Dominicans who came to China in the 17th century, as well as the accomplishment by other religious orders.¹⁶ Tragically, with the arrival of missionaries from other societies, conflict of different opinions over the strategy adopted by the Jesuits eventually turned the whole missionary enterprise into turmoil. The Chinese Rites controversy,¹⁷ which centred around the translation of "Deus" into Chinese terms and the accommodating attitude concerning ancestral and Confucian worship, caused the decline of the Jesuit mission in China in the early 18th century. Kangxi had been friendly to the

Xavier" in *History's Lessons For Tomorrow's Mission* (Geneva: World Student Christian Federation, 1960); Rachel Attwater, *Adam Schall: A Jesuit at the Court of China, 1592-1666* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1963); J. F. Moran, *The Japanese and the Jesuits: Alessandro Valignano in Sixteenth-century Japan* (London: Routledge, 1993).

¹⁶ J. S. Cummins, *Jesuits and Friar in the Spanish Expansion to the East* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1986), provides very useful materials on the topic.

¹⁷ Books and articles on the Rites Controversy are numerous, more recent studies on the subject include:

F. A. Rouleau, "Chinese Rites Controversy", *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 3, pp. 611-617.

George Minamiki, *The Chinese Rites Controversy, from its Beginning to Modern Times* (Chicago: Loyola University, 1985).

Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: a Conflict of Cultures* (trans. by Janet Lloyd) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Jesuits and he indeed once issued an edict of toleration of the Catholic faith in 1692. However, he lost his patience with Rome as the papal legate sent to China refused to sanction what the Jesuits had been doing in China for more than a hundred years. Kangxi actually stood on the Jesuits' side and he agreed with the Jesuits in naming "Deus" by the Chinese terms "Shangdi" or "Tian" which could be found in the ancient Confucian classics. He also supported the idea that the ancestral and Confucian veneration by the Chinese should be treated as civil ceremonies rather than religious in its basic meaning. The intervention of the papal power further hampered the cause of the Catholic mission and indirectly led to the expulsion of all missionaries from China except a few Jesuits who survived until the complete dissolution of the Society of Jesus throughout the world by the Pope Clement XIV in 1773. Thus power struggle ruined the Christian mission in China in a miserable way that could well have been avoided.

In addition, the Protestant missionaries who succeeded in setting foot on the Chinese soil in the 19th century failed to recognise the lessons of the past. Few of them took genuine interest in the missionary approach adopted by the Jesuits. Once again, like many Europeans

in the past, they generally treated Chinese civilisation as something inferior to the Western culture and saw it as antagonistic to Christianity.¹⁸ Some even welcomed the Opium War as an appropriate lesson for the Chinese.¹⁹

¹⁸ Paul A. Cohen pointed out that the early Protestant missionaries were deeply and unavoidably committed to the proposition that "the true interests of the Chinese people could be served only by means of a fundamental re-ordering of Chinese culture". Cf. Cohen, "Christian Missions and their Impact to 1900", in John King Fairbank and Denis Twitchett (eds.) *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 10, p. 542.

Some missionaries would just view all other religions they encountered as more or less "completely erroneous, creations of the darkened minds and superstitious fears of men", cf. Edward Caldwell Moore, *The Spread of Christianity in the Modern World* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1919).

¹⁹ Dr. Edward Steane, Secretary of the Baptist Union, wrote the following words in the *Baptist Magazine* (June, 1859):

... I would not, however, by this silence, be supported to look upon the iniquitous cupidity of our Opium traffic otherwise than as a great crime, and the war, to which we resorted to enforce it, as at once a national calamity and a disgrace. But it is the prerogative of God, out of evils which nations inflict upon another, to bring forth their greater good, and even to make the very sins of men subserve the designs of His mercy to the world ...

Quoted in H. R. Williamson, *British Baptists in China* (London: Carey Kingsgate Press Ltd., 1957), p. 21.

Samuel Wells Williams (1812-1884) of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions once in

Under such circumstances, it would be difficult to separate the Christian mission from the domination of Western imperialism and European expansionism. Therefore it would be very interesting to single out a particular missionary who has stood wholeheartedly for Chinese culture and its heritage in that era and to look at his ideas closely to examine the significance of such attempt. Among the early Protestant missionaries labouring in China, James Legge stood head and shoulders above most of his compatriots in appreciating and understanding Chinese culture while contributing immeasurable input to let the West know more about the Chinese mind. As a missionary to the East, Legge also performed the task as a missionary to the West, as a bridge-builder between the two spheres of culture. So we come back to the very basic questions concerning this

1841 had criticized the British expedition in China in 1840 as "an unjust one" but later in 1859 expressed the following view:

... I am sure that the Chinese need harsh measures to bring them out of their ignorance, conceit, and idolatry; why then deplore the means used to accomplish this end, so much as to blind our minds to the result which God seems to be advancing by methods whose inherent wrong he can punish at his own time.

See F. W. Williams, *Life and Letters of S. Wells Williams* (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889), pp. 122 and 325.

man: Who is he? What has he done? Why is he viewed as important in the realm of Christian mission in China?

CHAPTER ONE: THE STRANGE CASE OF JAMES LEGGE: A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A Forgotten Figure

As someone who has received the honour as being the first Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at the Oxford University, James Legge is a forgotten figure in the place where he laboured for almost 30 years. The astonishing fact is that he is even less-well known among the Chinese Christian circle in Hong Kong.¹ In addition, while British and American missionaries like Robert Morrison, Hudson Taylor (1832-1905), Timothy Richard (1845-1919), Peter Parker (1804-1888), W. A. P. Martin (1827-1916), and Young J. Allen (1836-1907) have all received a lot of attention among Western literature on Christian missions in China, Legge has been obliterated

¹ The present writer first heard of James Legge's name in 1974 in one of the secondary school Chinese language lessons on the *Confucian Analects* at St. Stephen's College, Stanley, Hong Kong. The teacher teaching that class was not a Christian and he did not mention that Legge had been a missionary in Hong Kong. During a lecture on Christianity and Chinese culture in 1991 at the Theology Division of Chung Chi College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the present writer asked a group of senior students whether they heard of James Legge or not. Less than one third of them replied in the affirmative.

in this realm for a long time.² Stimulated by the work of Dr. Andrew Ross, *John Philip (1775-1851): Mission, Race and Politics in South Africa*,³ the present writer would

² Robert Morrison and Hudson Taylor remain as the most famous missionaries in Chinese Christians' minds.

Modern studies on these missionaries would not be difficult to find. For example, Lindsay Ride, *Robert Morrison, the Scholar and the Man* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1957).

Adrian Arthur Bennett, *Missionary Journalist in China: Young J. Allen and his magazine, 1860-1883* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1983).

Edward V. Gulick, *Peter Parker and the Opening of China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973).

The multi-volume *Hudson Taylor and China's Open Century* by A. J. Broomhall, published by Hodder and Stoughton and the Overseas Missionary Fellowship.

Ralph F. Covell, W. A. P. Martin, *Pioneer of Progress in China* (Washington: Christian University Press, 1978).

Jonathan D. Spence, *The China Helpers: Western Advisers in China* (London: Bodley Head, 1969).

W. E. Soothill, *Timothy Richard of China* (London: Seely Service and Co., 1924); Paul Richard Bohr, *Famine in China and the Missionary: Timothy Richard as Relief Administrator and Advocate of National Reform, 1876-1884*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: East Asian Research Centre, Harvard University, 1972).

³ Andrew Ross, *John Philip (1775-1851): Missions, Race and Politics in South Africa* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986). Dr. John Philip, quite similar to James Legge as a London Missionary Society worker and "one of the truly outstanding Scotsmen and missionary leaders of the nineteenth century", is unknown in his native Scotland except to students of South Africa history. Cf. Ross, *ibid.*, p. 1, Dr. Ross provides a striking portrait of a neglected but noteworthy man, seen by some as

like to look at Legge's missionary career from different perspectives and try to re-discover the significance of Legge's missionary approach in relation to the contemporary scene, especially for Christians who care about the future of Christianity both in China and in Hong Kong. Just as Legge is usually remembered as a prominent Sinologist (especially among British scholars) in the 19th century, the present writer would stress upon his status both as a "devoted" missionary and a great scholar.

The Religious Background of Legge and Its Relationship with Foreign Missions

Congregationalism has contributed handsomely to the magnificent role which Scotland has played in the missionary enterprise. John Philip, James Legge, James Chalmers, David Livingstone, James Gilmour, Eric Liddell - names such as these shine like the sun in the annals of the World Church.⁴

Echoing Dr. Harry Escott's words, the figures shown by James M. Calder also indicate that members from the

the founder of South African liberalism, a missionary whose attitudes and arguments have continuing and telling relevance in Africa today. Cf. Ross, *ibid.*, back page.

⁴ Harry Escott, *A History of Scottish Congregationalism* (Glasgow: the Congregational Union of Scotland, 1960), p. 145.

Scottish Congregational churches have been active participants in overseas missionary work. Among the 1,800 London Missionary Society missionaries appointed between 1795 and 1945, at least 284 of them are known to have been Scots.⁵ In the midst of these Scottish missionaries, no less than 132 of them were from Congregational Churches.⁶ Such number would be more impressive when it is related to the number of churches and church membership.⁷

Scottish Congregationalism has a rather long history, dating back to the late 16th century with the influence of Englishmen like Robert Browne (c.1550-1633).⁸ The advent of the native movements⁹ like the Glasites and the Old Scots Independents in the 18th century helped Scottish Congregationalism to take a different path from their English counterparts.¹⁰ G.L.S. Thompson points out that though suffering from the problem of secessions

⁵ James M. Calder, *Scotland's March Past: The Share of Scottish Churches in the London Missionary Society* (London: the Livingstone Press, 1945), p. 31.

⁶ James M. Calder, *ibid.*, p. 29.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁸ Harry Escott, *ibid.*, pp. 3-8. Cf. G. L. S. Thompson, *The Origins of Congregationalism in Scotland* (unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1932), pp. 1-38.

⁹ "Native movement" is a term used by Harry Escott in Part Two of his book.

¹⁰ G. L. S. Thompson, *ibid.*, pp. 113ff.

during that period, the Old Scots Independents displayed commendable zeal for philanthropic and missionary causes.¹¹ By the very late 18th century came the Haldane Revival. The Haldane brothers, Robert (1764-1842) and James Alexander (1768-1851), particularly the latter, had a profound but unintended influence on the religious setting of James Legge's early life. The key person directly influenced by James Haldane was George Cowie (1749-1806),¹² the first Congregational minister in the church of Huntly (1800-1806)¹³ in Aberdeenshire and 'the morning star of Congregationalism in the north'.¹⁴

Meanwhile, the foundation of the London Missionary Society in the south occurred just before the Haldane

¹¹ Ibid., p. 117, quoting from the *London Christian Instruction* (1819), pp. 484-485.

¹² For biographical sketches of George Cowie, one can consult: Robert Troup, *The Missionar Kirk of Huntly* (Edinburgh and Glasgow: John Menzies, 1901), pp. 1-95; Robert Kinniburgh, *Fathers of Independency in Scotland, (or Biographical Sketches of Early Scottish Congregational Ministers, A. D. 1798-1851)*, (Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London: A. Fullarton, 1851), pp. 13-26.

Harry Escott, *Beacons of Independency: Religion and Life in Strathbogie and Upper Garioch in the nineteenth century* (Huntly: Express, 1940), pp. 19-25.

¹³ Harry Escott, *A History of Scottish Congregationalism*, p. 360. Cf. G. L. S. Thompson, *ibid.*, pp. 266-267.

¹⁴ Harry Escott, *ibid.*, p. 73. Cf. Harry Escott, *Beacons of Independency*, p. 19.

Revival in Scotland. In September 1795, the small committee appointed to draw up the plan of the new LMS had included three London Scottish Presbyterian ministers, John Love, James Steven, and Alexander Waugh.¹⁵ These three, though they were not Congregational clergymen, already shown the Scottish presence at the very beginning of the LMS. Apart from them, a founder of the LMS, an originator of the Religious Tract Society and also one of the first editors of the *Evangelical Magazine*, David Bogue, was a minister of the Congregational Church at Gosport.¹⁶ Bogue had left the Presbyterian fold to join the family of Scottish Congregationalism. As early as in September 1794, he had published the paper "To the Evangelical Dissenters who practice Infant Baptism" in the *Evangelical Magazine* which was described as the immediate precursor of the LMS.¹⁷ Moreover, the Haldane brothers were old friends of David Bogue and their missionary zeal was aroused mainly by this brilliant campaigner of missions.¹⁸ It would be extremely difficult for us to separate Scottish Congregationalism and overseas missions from each other

¹⁵ James M. Calder, *Scotland's March Past*, p. 1.

¹⁶ James M. Calder, *ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

¹⁷ Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895, Vol. 1* (London: Henry Frowde, 1899), pp. 5-10.

¹⁸ James M. Calder, *ibid.*, p. 4.

at this stage. From 1795 to 1845, the LMS appointed 475 missionaries and 81 of them were Scots.¹⁹ William Milne, the 'coadjutor with Robert Morrison of China',²⁰ was converted by George Cowie and joined the 'Missionar Kirk of Huntly'. Later he was under the tutelage of Bogue at Gosport²¹ and he went to China three years before Legge was born. The Huntly church from its commencement has been famous for its contribution of dedicated life to the cause of missions. It has given to the Church Universal men like William Milne and James Legge.²²

The first dominant figure in the history of the Huntly Congregational Church must be George Cowie. Born in 1749 in the parish of Marnoch, near Banff, Cowie entered Marischal College, Aberdeen and gained a bursary when he was only 12 years old.²³ When he was 16, he was appointed schoolmaster in the Presbytery of Huntly.²⁴ He

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

²⁰ Harry Escott, *A History of Scottish Congregationalism*, p. 257.

²¹ James M. Calder, *ibid.*, p. 14. Cf. Richard Lovett, *ibid.*, p. 74.

²² Harry Escott, *ibid.*, p. 257.

²³ Robert Troup, *The Missionar Kirk of Huntly*, p. 3. Cf. Robert Kinniburgh, *Fathers of Independency in Scotland*, p. 13 and Harry Escott, *Beacons of Independence*, p. 19.

²⁴ Robert Troup, *ibid.*, pp. 5-6; cf. Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*, p. 13 and Harry Escott, *ibid.*

underwent some kind of spiritual conflict in 1765 and there was a report flowing round the country saying that "Cowie was mad with religion".²⁵ Under the ministry of some pious Antiburghers, he was induced to join in communion with them in August 1766. For this he was expelled from the Presbyterian school in Huntly. Soon after he was persuaded to study divinity among his new connections and he was later ordained in February 1771 as a pastor.²⁶ The main reason for Cowie to join the Antiburghers was to have the fellowship with the pious

²⁵ Robert Troup, *ibid.*, p. 11; cf. Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*

²⁶ Robert Troup, *ibid.*, pp. 12ff.; cf. Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*, p. 11. The antiburgher tradition can be traced back to the 1747 'Antiburgher' synod (or the General Associate Synod). The Antiburghers played a dissenting role in opposition to the state-supported Presbyterian church in Scotland. They shared in the Secession's reputation for strictness in doctrine and discipline. The Secession of 1733 was the first secession from the national church led by Ebenezer Erskine (1680-1754) and his brother Ralph Erskine (1685-1752). The Antiburghers condemned the "Burgess Oath" of 1744 which was taken by citizens of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth, endorsing the religion professed in the realm. The issue was important to the Associate Synod (or the "Burgher" Synod) because within a burgh, none but burgesses were permitted to engage in commerce, belong to a trade guild, or enjoy the privilege of voting. The stricter discipline exercised by the Antiburghers bore fruit in their considerably greater success in missionary work than the Burghers achieved.

whom he found in that body ... like himself, been made the subjects of the Spirit's sanctifying influence.'²⁷

Before the arrival of the Haldane brothers Cowie had already been enthusiastic in the promotion of Sunday schools and foreign missions, as well as the revival of religion at home.²⁸ A society was instituted at Huntly in September 1795, which connected itself with the LMS and for a long time was one of the most efficient auxiliaries to the parent society in the North of Scotland. In June 1797. the Missionary Society at Huntly published a circular on the subject of Missions, to which Cowie subjoined a letter addressed to 'all the lovers of the Lord Jesus' which could be found on page 450 in the *Missionary Magazine* (May, 1797).²⁹ However, the critical moment came on October 26 and 27 of that year. After listening to the preaching of James Haldane, Cowie threw himself thoroughly into the Revival Movement.³⁰ With the visit of Rowland Hill in 1799, Cowie was brought into conflict with the Antiburgher fellowship by allowing Hill to preach publicly in his church.

²⁷ Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*

²⁸ Robert Troup, *ibid.*, chapters II to V, pp. 22ff.; Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*, pp. 16-17; Harry Escott, *ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁹ Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*

On the 20th April 1800 the case came before the Synod and sentence of deposition was passed upon him [Cowie]. He was guilty neither of heresy nor of immorality. He was neither insufficient in his ministry nor ungodly in his conduct. And yet the Church cast him out. His people, however, stood by him to a man. What the Antiburghers lost, the Independents gained. With the Congregationalists they threw in their lot and so began the Huntly Congregational Church.³¹

From then on Cowie 'did more to prepare the way for Independency in this part of Scotland than all the ministers of Aberdeen'.³² Dr. John Morrison, one of the foremost figures in the personnel of Scottish Congregationalism in the 19th century,³³ described Cowie as 'a person in all respects original ... had no competitor, no equal in the north of Scotland.'³⁴ Under Cowie's pastoral care and his evangelical teaching, families of fervent piety and missionary zeal grew.³⁵ Among them was the Legge's family.³⁶

³⁰ Robert Troup, *ibid.*, chapter VI, pp. 76ff.; Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*, pp. 17ff.

³¹ G. L. S. Thompson, *The Origins of Congregationalism in Scotland*, p. 257.

³² Harry Escott, *ibid.*, p. 21; Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*, p. 25.

³³ Harry Escott, *ibid.*, p. 23.

³⁴ Harry Escott, *ibid.*, p. 24; Robert Kinniburgh, *ibid.*, pp. 22ff.

³⁵ Robert Troup, *ibid.*, p. 153.

³⁶ In Robert Troup's book, *ibid.*, the last two chapters XII and XIII are dedicated to the six deacons of the

Huntly at the beginning of the "Great Century" was 'a little town in a hollow', and surrounded on every side by heath and fir-covered hills.³⁷ It is situated in the region of Strathbogie where "a race of men of unusual physical rigour and force of character, who have throw themselves eager into whatever sphere of activity

"Missionar Kirk" which includes John Legge, one of the elder brothers of James Legge (cf. pp. 136-139) and the sons of the "Missionar Kirk" which also takes into account of George Legge, the eldest brother of James Legge (cf. pp. 161-163), along with James Legge himself (cf. pp. 168-173).

In an article found in *The Scottish Congregationalist* (March, 1936) entitled "The Historic 'Missionar Kirk'. Interesting Memorial Scheme", pp. 47-48, there is a list of famous church figures connected with the Huntly Congregational Church. Among these figures one can find George MacDonald, the famous novelist and poet; Rev. George Cran, who founded the Telgu Mission in India; Dr. William Milne, the pioneer missionary in China; Dr. James Legge and Dr. James Spence. Cran, Milne and Legge were missionaries to the East.

Several names were being proposed to be commemorated by panels in the new windows of the Huntly Congregational Church in that year: Rev. George Cowie, Rev. Robert Troup, George MacDonald, Dr. William Milne, Rev. George Cran and Prof. James Legge.

³⁷ Memoir by James Legge, M.A., son of Prof. Legge's elder brother John Legge, in *Memorials of John Legge* (London: J. Clarke, 1880), xi. The memorials were about John Legge Jr. (1837-1878), M.A. in 1862 at Aberdeen, cf. William Johnston, *Roll of Graduates of the University 1860-1900* (printed at Aberdeen University, 1906), p. 284. The younger James Legge was the brother of John Legge Jr.

happened to be their lot in life' had lived.³⁸ Legge clearly shows such traits in his career. We do not know what the exact date for the arrival of the Legges in Huntly was. Nevertheless, according to Legge's nephew with the same first surname, it was Legge's grandfather who first migrated to Huntly and had 'a well-merited reputation for integrity and piety' among its people.³⁹

Legge thought that his family name might be of Scandinavian origin or that it could come from Italy based on the term "Della Legge", i.e., of the Laws. During his missionary career in the Far East, he deliberately chose the Chinese surname Li 'because it means something like Justice, and represents something which he admired, while recalling the possible etymology of his own name.'⁴⁰ As stated by Legge himself, his grandfather was an anti-Jacobite, but little else is known about him.⁴¹ Legge's father, Ebenezer, was a

³⁸ Harry Escott, *Beacons of Independency*, p. 79.

³⁹ Memoir by James Legge, M.A., *ibid.* This younger James Legge was also a graduate at Aberdeen, receiving his M.A. in 1863, cf. William Johnston, *ibid.*, p. 283.

⁴⁰ Mary Dominica Legge, granddaughter of Prof. Legge, "Address on James Legge to the Sino-Scottish Society of the University of Edinburgh (1951)", in "Miscellaneous Legge family papers, 1873-1951", MS. Eng. misc. c. 865, fol. 35, in the Bodleian Library.

⁴¹ "Notes of My Life", a typescript copy of Prof. Legge himself for his sons and daughters, p. 3. The writing of this autographical note began on March

prosperous tradesman in Huntly.⁴² Ebenezer had 4 sons, George, John, William and James. James Legge was the youngest one.

Ebenezer Legge himself was a staunch supporter of George Cowie's ministry in Huntly. In the eyes of the Legge family, Cowie was a very remarkable man, 'mighty in the Scriptures; a profound theologian, but somewhat lax in his ecclesiastical principles, and with an unlimited power of preaching long sermons.'⁴³ Among the sons of Ebenezer Legge, two were faithful servants of the Huntly Church. John Legge was one of the six deacons mentioned by Robert Troup while William was the chief magistrate of Huntly for several years and a much-esteemed office-bearer and treasurer of the Huntly congregation.⁴⁴ The

15, 1896. This document is the most valuable document for the understanding of Legge's early years. However, these notes ended abruptly at the period of the early 1840s. The present writer is using the copy kept in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, MS. Eng. misc. d. 996, in the same library. The original hand-written manuscript can be found in the LMS Archives, China-Personal, J. Legge, Box 10.

⁴² James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 2.

⁴³ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", pp. 5-6.

⁴⁴ Robert Troup, *The Missionar Kirk of Huntly*, pp. 136-139. One of John Legge's son was the one mentioned in note 37 of this chapter. The younger John Legge of Brighton, Victoria, migrated to Australia in 1865. He was later the Chairman of the Congregational Union in Victoria. Cf. *The Victorian Independent* (January, 1879), pp. 8-11, for his memorial, which is also kept in "Miscellaneous Legge

eldest son, Rev. George Legge (1802-1861), LL.D., graduated from King's College, Aberdeen with the benefit of a valuable bursary. George later became a teacher and taught in a school in Huntly. Somehow he moved to the south and taught for some years and then he decided to study theology at the Highbury College in London. Ordained in 1832, George became the pastor of Congregational church in Bristol for 4 years. Thereafter he laboured in Leicester for a quarter of a century until his death. He was elected as the chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1859.⁴⁵ No one would be too surprised to see George's youngest brother would tread a similar path like him, especially in his early years.

family papers", MS. Eng. misc. c. 865, fols. 49-51, in the Bodleian Library.

The son of William Legge, John Robert Legge (born 1855), also received his M.A. in Aberdeen in 1875 and was a Congregational minister too. Cf. William Johnston, *ibid.*, p. 284.

⁴⁵ Robert Troup, *ibid.*, pp. 161-163. James Legge, George's youngest brother, wrote a memoir on him on December 30, 1862. The memoir is in George Legge, *Lectures on Theology, Science and Revelation* (London, 1863).

The Early Years of Legge

James Legge was born on December 20, 1815, the year that Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo. Huntly remained his home until he went to England in 1835. Besides the three brothers mentioned, three more children were born before his birth. However, all of them, 2 girls and 1 boy, died very soon. Adding to the tragedies of the family, Legge's mother passed away shortly after his birth. She was remembered by the family as a woman of extraordinary personal attractions. She was said to be able to repeat all the Psalms without missing a word.⁴⁶ The second mother of Legge was so good to him that he only knew the truth when he was 7 or 8 years old.⁴⁷ Legge's father, conscious of his own disadvantages through the want of education owing to sickness and poverty while he was young, was resolved that none of his sons should labour under the same disability.⁴⁸ As a prosperous man of business who held a foremost standing in the community,⁴⁹ Ebenezer would try his very best to let his sons to have as much proper learning as possible.

⁴⁶ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 2.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

⁴⁹ Helen Edith Legge (daughter of James Legge), *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar* (London: Religious

James Legge had shown quick memory at an early stage⁵⁰ and he began to learn Latin at the age of 10 or so at the boys' school in Huntly.⁵¹ During that time, there were five churches in Huntly: the Established, the Secession (antiburghers), the Congregational, the Episcopal, and the Roman Catholic. There was a Latin class at the Parish School and students came to this school from all the different churches except the Roman Catholic.⁵² Legge went to the Parish School at the end of 1827.⁵³ In the spring of 1829, Legge moved to Aberdeen to study at the Grammar School there. The rector of the school was Dr. Melvin, 'a really great Latinist, whose fame was spread throughout all the north of Scotland'. In Aberdeen, Rev. James Spence took care of Legge since he was a brother of Legge's step mother.⁵⁴

Legge had several notable friends at the Grammar School. The two eldest sons (twins) of William Milne were

Tract Society, 1905), p. 1. Though still a valuable biography of James Legge, the book touches relatively little on Legge's early years. Thus making "Notes of My Life" even more precious in the study of Legge.

⁵⁰ James Legge, *ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

there. Actually Milne himself and Legge's father had been well acquainted for many years. The elder of the Milne brothers eventually went out to China with Legge in the same vessel in 1839. Rev. Dr. W.H. Burns' younger son, Islay Burns, was also a class fellow of Legge. Islay's elder brother, William Chalmers, had already entered Marischal College.⁵⁵ William Chalmers Burns (1815-1868), who became the first missionary of the English Presbyterian Church to China, renewed acquaintance with Legge when they met again in Hong Kong years later.

Soon Legge joined Rev. Mitchell at the Grammar School of old Aberdeen for the study of Latin. He excelled in his class as he always finished his translations of Latin right after the dictation of the passage in English by his teacher.⁵⁶ The great academic test came with the competition for the first bursary of King's College in 1831. Almost killed in an accident ten days before the competition,⁵⁷ Legge recovered well in

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 24-25.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 27-28. Quoted also in Helen Edith Legge's work, pp. 1-2. One may also note that the students had to take down the dictation on their slates because pencil and paper were too expensive by then!

⁵⁷ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", pp. 28-30; cf. Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 2. In 1831 Earl Grey's Reform Bill was thrown out by the House of Lords. There was a protest in Aberdeen. Legge almost died as the platform of the protest meeting collapsed.

time to take part in the contest. 98 candidates sat for the test for 4 hours (from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) in 2 consecutive days. On the first day it was an assignment of translation from English to Latin. On the next day the task was reversed. Legge finished at about eleven on the first day. Reporting in his own words about the second day, 'I left the Hall sooner than I had done the day before, and I believe the exercise was pronounced to be quite correct, *sine errore*'.⁵⁸ The result called out by the Principal, Rev. Dr. Jack a few days later was, 'First bursary, Jacobus Legge'.⁵⁹

Anyway, the scholastic challenge of Legge did not end here. For no one who took the first bursary had been able to capture the most prestigious award offered by the University of Aberdeen, the Huttonian Prize. So the quest for academic excellence still continued for Legge. Yet deep inside his soul there were already fervent struggles on a totally different battlefield.

The Emergence of A Scholar and A Missionary

About the college life of Legge at Aberdeen, one important point to be made here is the scholarly eminence

⁵⁸ James Legge, *ibid.*, p. 31.

⁵⁹ H. E. Legge, *ibid.*, p. 3.

of Legge in both Latin and Greek. He finished first in Latin and second in Greek in his first session at Aberdeen.⁶⁰ For the second session he received the first prize in both of the languages.⁶¹ He became the top scholar in Latin once again in the following session though not in Greek.⁶² What he eagerly waited was the Huttonian Prize examination which started from the Monday of the last week but one of the final session. Before that demanding test of scholarship, Legge underwent a spiritual struggle which would ultimately determine his future career.

Legge was very close to his elder brothers, especially George and John. He wrote regularly to John in Huntly while studying at King's College⁶³ since John had been his guide, philosopher and friend for a long time.⁶⁴ In 1832 he wrote to John, telling him that he liked Chemistry and felt inclined to love all mankind better than ever. In 1833 he also wrote, 'a life of struggling

⁶⁰ James Legge, *ibid.*, p. 33. Legge studied under the Professor of Humanity Rev. Dr. Patrick Forbes who was also the Professor of Chemistry and "the ablest of Legge's professors".

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁶³ H. E. Legge, *ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶⁴ James Legge, *ibid.*, p. 17.

had always in my reveries to be my destiny'.⁶⁵ In the same year he went back to Huntly when the second session was over. George visited him from Bristol as the minister of the old and wealthy Congregational Church in Bridge Street.⁶⁶ Legge thus had the opportunity to visit with George and his father the grave of his grandfather and his mother. He remembered that his father had mentioned that he would have rather liked one of his sons to become a Missionary.

I thought at that time that this might be a word intended for myself. ... From that time, however, the idea of my own future began to come into my mind, and that, if I were really to become a Christian, it might be my duty to take on myself the vows of a Missionary to some heathen people.⁶⁷

Also recalling that the Huntly missionary to China, William Milne sometimes sent Ebenezer Legge some of his *Chinese Treatises or Persuasive to Christianity*, Legge wrote, 'in my better moments and higher aspiring, the thought of being myself a Chinese Missionary would sometimes occur to me'.⁶⁸ Of course Legge would not forget that his father had once said,

⁶⁵ H. E. Legge, *ibid.*, p. 4.

⁶⁶ James Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* William Milne died in Malacca on June 2, 1822 while Legge was not yet seven years old. Actually

I made up my mind long ago, that if any of my sons wished to go abroad to make known the gospel, I would give him my blessing, and say to him 'Go'; but if any of them wished to go from home to make money, he might go, but I would not give him my blessing.⁶⁹

In July 1834 Legge went to visit George as the two decided to meet in London. Suffering from the seasickness in one of the coasting steamers of those days, Legge resolved that he would never go to sea again. He was unconscious at that moment that there would be a time in the future when he had to go round the globe, without either qualm or losing a meal.⁷⁰ During that period Legge noticed that among the frequent visitors of his brother, there was one Mr. John Marshman who was the son of the famous missionary Dr. Joshua Marshman (1768-1837) of Serampore.⁷¹ These contacts and associations with missionaries probably brought him closer to the circle of foreign missions.

The examination for the Huttonian Prize came eventually in 1835. It lasted for 4 days. On Monday the

Milne started the Malacca mission in the year that Legge was born. Cf. Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, p. 13.

⁶⁹ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 4.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 45.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 47. Joshua Marshman, a pioneer Protestant missionary to India with William Carey, was one of the earliest men who translated the whole Scriptures into Chinese. Cf. Alexander Wylie, *ibid.*, pp. 2.

contestants had to translate Greek into Latin. On Tuesday they would face the paper on Mathematics. After a rest day on Wednesday there would be tests on Natural Philosophy and Moral Philosophy on Thursday and Friday respectively. Legge took first in the tests on Monday and Friday and he was ranked second on the other subjects. Thus at the age of nineteen he won the highest reward of merit offered by the University of Aberdeen.⁷² Yet with such public esteem another opportunity and crisis came to young Legge.

As the controversy within the Church of Scotland between the Moderates and the Evangelicals became hotter and hotter, things were already moving towards the Disruption of 1843. In such an atmosphere, Professor Forbes wanted to induce students of good promise to enter the ministry of the Established Church. Legge still remembered Professor Forbes' words long afterwards. "Enter our church, get a parish, continue your reading and study of Latin, and after that, in the event of my death, no one could be more likely than you to get appointed to my chair."⁷³ Legge's answer after some serious consideration clearly reflected that he was the son of one of George Cowie's most enthusiastic

⁷² James Legge, "Notes of My Life", pp. 51-54.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 55-57.

supporters. "I told the Professor that I thought it would be a bad way of beginning my life if I were, without any conviction on the subject, to turn from the principles of my father merely because of the temporal advantages which such a step would bring me."⁷⁴

So Legge had turned away the offer to be a potential candidate for the Professorship of Humanity at the University of Aberdeen in a most determined style. After the last session at King's College he learned French and Italian with a Mr. Calvert.⁷⁵ Legge received his M.A. in 1835 and he later found a job as a schoolmaster in Blackburn for £80 per annum.⁷⁶

During the summer of 1836 Legge went back home for vacation. By then he was already understood by all to be a future minister. However his own mind was drawn more and more to the field of foreign missions.⁷⁷ He left Blackburn in early 1837 and then lived with brother George at Leicester till September, preparing to enter

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 57; cf. H. E. Legge, *ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 58.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 60.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 70.

the Highbury Theological College.⁷⁸ At Leicester he had entered a course of Greek and theological reading for some months.⁷⁹ He was also brought into contact with the action of certain political parties. He even declared that 'my associates were mainly Liberals' at that time.⁸⁰ He found very little difficulty in entering Highbury. In 1826 the college had taken the place of Hoxton Academy, where Robert Morrison and John Philip had attended classes. Highbury was later amalgamated with 3 other institutions as New College in South Hampstead in 1850 and eventually closed.⁸¹ The course at Highbury extended over 4 years; the first two were on preliminary studies in Latin, Greek and Mathematics. Since Legge had already got the degree of M.A. with outstanding results in the above subjects, he was admitted directly into the class of the third year.⁸²

At Highbury Legge had a good deal of preaching in the nearby churches. One incident in that period somehow displayed the attitude of Legge to missionaries. The

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 71. Highbury Theological Seminary can be seen as a seminary for dissenters. From his own Congregational church background it would be quite natural for Legge to attend this seminary.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 72.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 75.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 82.

⁸² Ibid., p. 81.

Chairman of the Council for the College, Thomas Wilson, had once contended that he thought Legge's education fitted him to be a successful minister at home rather than a missionary abroad. Such a contention was not a surprising one because in those days there was quite a common belief that the ministers of a church at home ought to possess higher education than were necessary for a missionary serving abroad. If Ricci and his fellow Jesuits were born in Protestant families in early 19th century Britain, they would most probably have become ministers in local parishes. Legge stood firmly against such view and replied, 'I have maintained the direct opposite view both on the platform and in the pulpit'.⁸³ For such an utterance Legge's name was taken off the preaching list at the College for many weeks after he challenged Mr. Wilson's position. But Legge appealed to Dr. Halley, the lecturer in New Testament and Greek at Highbury at that time and later the Principal of New College after the amalgamation. The decision to drop his name from the preaching list was thus withheld.⁸⁴ Here we already have a glimpse of a potential missionary who did not avoid controversy and also one who would champion the cause of learning in mission fields.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 86.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 87.

Following the above incident Legge made known his wish to go abroad as a missionary to the Home Secretary of the LMS. He was then asked to attend a meeting of the Committee of its Board of Directors. The members of the Committee included Dr. Henderson, Legge's lecturer in Semitic Languages and Theology in Highbury, Dr. Halley and one Mr. Philip of Huntly.⁸⁵ It is not an astonishing fact that Legge was nominated to Malacca to assist in the Anglo-Chinese College very soon. However, such a nomination had to be confirmed since satisfactory report as to his health and suitability for work in the Far East had to be received from the physicians whom the Society consulted regarding their workers. The first doctor had provided an entirely favourable report but the second doctor held a totally different opinion. He considered Legge to have a tendency to consumption. So Legge went to the Guy's Hospital for the judgment of another doctor and

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 88. This Mr. Philip most probably would be Rev. Robert Philip (1791-1858) mentioned in Robert Troup's *The Missionar Kirk of Huntly*, pp. 159-161. Robert Philip had studied at the Hoxton Academy at London, and he later served as a pastor at the Maberly Chapel in London for thirty-one years. He also wrote several biographical works which included *The Life and Opinions of Rev. William Milne* (London: John Snow, 1840).

finally gained his confirmation of appointment to Malacca from the Committee of the Board.⁸⁶

Preparing to leave his homeland for foreign mission he arrived in Glasgow to meet brother William and visited Huntly too. He went to Elgin with his father, and on the return journey his father said to him, "When you are in China, and travelling with the people, you will have to speak to them about their religion and yours, you will have to be instant, in season and out of season, to fulfil the object of your mission." These became some recurring words to Legge for his entire missionary pursuit. By that time, Legge also would like to call himself as the child of "the missionar kirk".⁸⁷

Since Legge entered Highbury he had joined the church of Dr. John Morison of Brompton, the Trevor Chapel. He met the eldest child of Morison, Mary Isabella. Legge described her as 'devoutly pious, highly accomplished, and abounding in all good works; a successful teacher in the Sunday school, a sympathetic

⁸⁶ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", pp. 88-91. In this autobiographical note Legge did not mention the name of the doctor at the Guy's Hospital. In H. E. Legge's work, p. 9, this doctor "was afterwards widely known as the famous Sir William Jenner".

⁸⁷ James Legge, *ibid.*, p. 96.

helper of the poor and distressed'.⁸⁸ During the early spring of 1838, he had already written to Mr. and Mrs. Morison for permission to marry their daughter. Their marriage took place on April 30, 1839, just 5 days after Legge's ordination.⁸⁹

Before his marriage, Legge also had the opportunity to meet some renowned figures in that era in different places. He once listened to the lectures of Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847) and even became acquainted with Robert Owen (1771-1858). Owen told Legge in one occasion that Legge would have a great field to work in and Owen himself could assure Legge of a grand success.⁹⁰ Apart from these personal encounters, there was a 'very important event' of Legge's life in 1838, namely his commencement of the study of Chinese, undertaken at the instance of the LMS.⁹¹ By that time the Directors of the

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 98. Mary Isabella was born on April 13, 1816 and died on October 17, 1852.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 105. The wedding service was conducted by Dr. Wardlaw of Glasgow, an old and close friend of Dr. John Morison. Dr. John Morison himself was for many years the editor of the *Evangelical Magazine*.

⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 100-101.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 102. Thomas Chalmers, Scottish theologian and minister, in the Disruption of 1843 was elected the first moderator of the Free Church of Scotland. One particular thing he had in common with Robert Owen which would draw the attention of Legge would most probably be their concern about social reform. On becoming minister at St. John's, the largest and also the poorest parish in Glasgow, in 1819,

Society had resolved that Legge should sail for Malacca after mid-summer in 1839 with William Charles Milne (1815-1863, the eldest son of William Milne), Legge's one-time schoolmate, and also Dr. Benjamin Hobson (1816-1873), later a famous medical missionary in China. Legge, Milne, and Hobson all studied Chinese under Rev. Samuel Kidd (1799-1843).⁹² Kidd had been appointed Professor of the Chinese Language and Literature in University College, London in 1837 for the term of five years. As a LMS worker, Kidd had also studied theology under David Bogue (like William Milne) at Gosport from 1820 onwards. He then sailed to Malacca in 1824 and he was appointed Professor of Chinese in the Anglo-Chinese College in 1827. He became the Principal of the College in 1828. Returned to England in 1832, Kidd terminated his relation

Chalmers addressed himself to the problems of poverty. Receiving permission from the city to administer all the charitable funds donated in the churches, he had great success in improving the condition of the poor while reducing costs. On the other hand, Owen was an "atheist" in Legge's eyes, but his concern in social amelioration, his social welfare programmes, especially his stress on education of the young, would leave its mark on Legge's mind.

⁹² Ibid., p. 102.

with the Society.⁹³ Anyway, Kidd received the honour as the first professor of the Chinese Language and Literature among British universities.

Legge, Milne, and Hobson had classes with Kidd for 2 or 3 evenings a week. Though there were not many Chinese books for learning the language, they all felt that Kidd was 'a very competent teacher'.⁹⁴ Legge admitted that this period of study under Kidd 'bore fruit afterwards many fold'.⁹⁵ We can even say that Legge was now tracing almost the same footsteps of his seniors like Morrison, Milne, Kidd within the Society. After the first quarter of 1839 the three students ceased to go to University College. Legge bade farewell to Highbury and began to arrange the affairs of his ordination.

⁹³ Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries*, pp. 47-48; cf. John Owen Whitehouse, *London Missionary Society: a Register of Missionaries and Deputations, from 1796 to 1877* (London: Yates and Alexander, 1877), p. 73.

⁹⁴ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 102. Each of them had a copy of the great dictionary compiled by Robert Morrison and his Chinese translation of the New Testament. They also had a tract or two by William Milne and a copy of the *Lun Yü* (the *Confucian Analects*). This certainly would be the earliest opportunity for Legge to come across any part of the Chinese Classics.

⁹⁵ James Legge, *ibid.*, p. 103.

The ordination of Legge took place on April 25, 1839 at the Trevor Chapel. Dr. John Morison was responsible for the preliminary address and Mr. Philip questioned Legge.⁹⁶ While brother George delivered the Charge, it was Professor Kidd who offered the Ordination Prayer. Legge once again demonstrated his strength of will in recollecting the event. 'Happily I was not asked to sign any creed. ... If such a requisition had been made, I would not have obeyed it'.⁹⁷ On the written answers to the questions in the ordination, he declared,

My views are prevailingly what are usually denominated evangelical. But I do not profess myself of any school or party, I would not

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 104. In the written record of his pre-ordination examination, a typed script kept in the LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 9, Legge answered the following four questions: Question First, what leads you to conclude that you are a Christian? Question Second, what induced you to devote yourself to the work of a Missionary among the heathen? Question Third, what are the doctrines which you believe to be contained in the Holy Scriptures? Question Fourth, how do you purpose to exercise your ministry among the heathen?

In answering the first question, Legge replied that it was through gradual understanding of the Bible and the experience of his own heart which brought him steadily to coincide with the truths of the gospel, cf. "Pre-ordination Examination", p. 6. In answering the second one, Legge firmly held that "I must state that I never was without thoughts of being a Missionary", cf. *ibid.*, p. 7. He also added, "We are not our own but bought with a price. The love of Christ contraineth us", cf. *ibid.*, p. 9.

⁹⁷ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 104.

subscribe to any creed ... now that I am over fourscore, I should employ stronger terms and affirm my judgment at greater length.⁹⁸

What a staunch Independent he looked!

After the ordination he journeyed back to Scotland with his newly married wife and spoke at a missionary meeting at Huntly. By the end of June 1839 the couple went back to London and visited Leicester for brother George till the end of July. They went on board with nine other passengers on July 28 and were ready for the Far East in the vessel *Eliza Stewart*.⁹⁹

A True Successor of Morrison and Milne or Not

The journey from Britain to Java took more than 3 months. For Mrs. Legge, it really needed 'constant supplies of grace to rise above the indescribable uniformity of a lengthened sea voyage'.¹⁰⁰ Throughout the sea journey, apart from devotional time, Legge concentrated on his study of Chinese, though his wife

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 105.

⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 105-110.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 114. The words were stated by Legge's wife in her letter to her mother, dated October 2, 1839. The letter was written off the coast of Africa. By then the ship had not met any other vessel since August 23, cf. *ibid.*, p. 111.

sometimes did tempt him from it.¹⁰¹ As they reached Java, it was already November of the year. They left the ship with Miss Coombes, a missionary herself to Java, at Anjer in the Straits of Sunda.¹⁰² They proceeded to Batavia (now Jakarta) by a 'somewhat precarious coach ride',¹⁰³ and had the chance to meet the 'foremost Chinese Scholar then in the field', Dr. Walter Henry Medhurst (1796-1857).¹⁰⁴ Medhurst had been a teacher at the Anglo-Chinese College from 1818 to 1820, even before Kidd's arrival in Malacca.¹⁰⁵ Legge also acknowledged that the more he knew of Medhurst, the more occasion he found to admire this

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 115.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 120.

¹⁰³ Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁴ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 126.

¹⁰⁵ Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, p. 25. Cf. Jane Kate Leonard, "W. H. Medhurst: Rewriting the Missionary Message", in Suzanne Wilson Barnett and John King Fairbank (eds.) *Christianity in China: Early Protestant Missionary Writings* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 49. Jane Kate Leonard's article shows how the failure of Medhurst's religious mission among the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia led him to innovate, emphasizing secular learning, while at the same time narrowing and simplifying his religious tracts. These changes in his writings suggest the influence of the Chinese cultural setting on one of the founders of the Anglo-American missionary movement, cf. *ibid.*, p. 15, and pp. 47-59.

senior colleague.¹⁰⁶ In Batavia Legge had the first chance to visit a Chinese temple. Accompanied by Medhurst, he went to the 'Tien Hau Temple' (literally, "the Queen of Heaven" Temple).¹⁰⁷ Furthermore Legge studied Chinese under Medhurst's guidance along with two American missionaries. One was William James Boone (1812-1864), who later had much controversy with Legge and Medhurst on the vexed question of the Chinese terms to be used for God and Spirit.¹⁰⁸ Legge claimed that he excelled among the three pupils of Medhurst. He recalled that Medhurst had told him after their first meeting, "You do credit, Mr. Legge, to Mr. Kidd's teaching. Hold on, do not be in

¹⁰⁶ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 127.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 128.

Bishop William James Boone, consecrated as Missionary Bishop for China in 1844 by the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, reached Batavia in 1837. His collision with Legge over the 'Term Question' will be dealt with in the next chapter. The other American missionary then under Medhurst's tuition was William John Pohlman, an ordained minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in the United States. He was later appointed as a missionary to the Chinese in connection with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. He arrived at Singapore in 1838. He moved on to Army, one of the Treaty ports, in 1844. Unfortunately he was drowned after a shipwreck on January 5, 1949. Cf. Alexander Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 111.



a hurry to think you have attained, and by and by you will make a good Chinese scholar."¹⁰⁹

In Batavia Legge also met Dr. William Lockhart (1812-1896) whom he already knew in London in 1838, and Medhurst's son. The arrival of two men at the Mission quarters in Batavia was a great event.¹¹⁰

Before Legge went to Singapore Medhurst mentioned to him the condition and prospects of different matters at Malacca and the Anglo-Chinese College. Medhurst also spoke of the deficiencies of the two translations of the New Testament by Robert Morrison and Joshua Marshman.¹¹¹ Then Legge and his wife set sail for Singapore. From the Foreign Secretary of the LMS in Singapore Legge received his parting letter and he knew through this document that he would get 300 pounds a year for all their needs, together with a free house and the wages of a Chinese teacher.¹¹² In Singapore Legge met Rev. John Stronach, another Scottish LMS man in the field. John and his brother, Alexander, had arrived in their stations, Singapore and Penang respectively, not long ago.¹¹³ In

¹⁰⁹ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 128.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 129.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 130.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 136.

¹¹³ Alexander Stronach and John Stronach were both born in Edinburgh. John later moved to Amoy in 1844 and

Batavia, Medhurst's report on the Malacca station was rather negative and one-sided. An exaggerated report was also roundly asserted by John Stronach. Influenced by these opinions, Legge acted, as he admitted later wrongly or foolishly when he left Singapore. He accepted a local Fu-kien teacher to go with him to Malacca so as to avoid contact with John Evans (1801-1840), the Principal of the Anglo-Chinese College at that time, and his department as much as he could!¹¹⁴ Unfortunately, it is quite clear that Legge never got along well with Evans in their ministry at Malacca. Evans once wrote about young Legge to the director of the Society,

It has been for some time a matter of much grief to me to see a young man ... entirely ignorant of the manners and customs of the natives and quite inexperienced, not only desirous of introducing and setting up his own plans, but insisting on having them carried into effect...It is greivous, very greivous for me to inform you that in consequence of Mr. Legge acting as above stated, both Mr. Werth and myself feel it to be our conscientious duty to separate ourselves from him. Indeed ... we

then to Shanghai in 1847, having been appointed as one of the Delegates for the revision of the Chinese version of the New Testament. Alexander moved to Hong Kong in 1846 and then to Amoy. Cf. Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, pp. 103-105; and J. W. Whitehouse, *LMS: A Register of Missionaries and Deputations*, pp. 117-118.

¹¹⁴ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 137.

cannot any longer unite...until you send out others to succeed us in the work ...¹¹⁵

Perhaps Evans' words and Medhurst's comment on the Malacca station reflected a familiar and genuine picture about the difference of opinions between missionaries in their own working environment.

On January 10, 1840 Legge and his wife arrived at Malacca. The infamous Opium War between Britain and China had already broken out. Against the record by C. Silvester Horne in *The Story of the LMS*, Legge stated that he came to Malacca 'with no thought of assuming the charge of the Anglo-Chinese College'.¹¹⁶ He also insisted

¹¹⁵ These harsh and critical comments from John Evans on Legge can be found in Brian Harrison's *Waiting for China: The Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca, 1813-1843, and Early Nineteenth-Century Missions* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1979), pp. 105-106, quoting from a letter by Evans to the Directors of the LMS, dated November 5, 1840, cf. Harrison, *ibid.*, p. 180, note 4 of chapter thirteen.

The "Mr. Werth" mentioned in that letter, was Henrich Christian Werth, a German missionary sent from Singapore in 1839 as temporary replacement for Samuel Dyer (1804-1843), the famous printer in using movable types for Chinese materials who was on leave in England, cf. Harrison, *ibid.*, p. 180, note 3 of chapter thirteen.

¹¹⁶ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 142. In C. Silvester Horne's work, we can find the following sentence, "It was at the beginning of the year 1840 that James Legge ... arrived at Malacca, and assumed the charge of the Anglo-Chinese College". Cf. Charles Silvester Horne, *The Story of the L. M. S., 1795-1895*, (London: John Snow, 1894), p. 309.

that 'my subsequent connection with the College grew out of painful events which made me think of throwing up the missionary work, and returning to England.'¹¹⁷ What sort of 'painful events' we may never know, but we are quite certain that Legge did later take up the task of leading the College and he even moved the whole institution to a new location. No matter what happened, Legge definitely showed his great admiration of the pioneers, Morrison and Milne, in his autobiographical notes.¹¹⁸ He described this duo as 'a truly Christian association', while Morrison's was perhaps the stronger mind, Milne's the finer.¹¹⁹ Even though Morrison had accepted the job of the translator of the East India Company, Legge reiterated that Morrison's true inward motives should not be doubted.¹²⁰ Can we then

¹¹⁷ James Legge, *ibid.* Legge once wrote, "... let the young missionary not be permitted to enter his station entirely ignorant of its history ...", in a letter dated August 1, 1840 to the LMS, LMS Archives, Ultra Ganges, China-Malacca (Incoming Letters), Box 3, Folder No. 4, Jacket D.

¹¹⁸ Legge never had time to finish his whole life story in "Notes of My Life". After mentioning the "painful events", without going to the details of these events, Legge's attention shifted to the origins of the Malacca mission and the two pioneers in the field, Robert Morrison and William Milne. In fact, the rest of "Notes of My Life", from p. 142 onwards, covers only the story of Morrison, Milne, and their families, as well as the story of their faithful Chinese colleague, Liang A-fah (1789-1855).

¹¹⁹ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 146.

¹²⁰ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 144.

say that Legge was a close disciple of Morrison, or even of Milne? To answer this question one must ask another question first: what were the "visions" and "dreams" of Morrison and Milne?

Lindsay Ride provides the following answer to the latter question. Ride maintains that Morrison's goal was China, and his aim was to bring Christianity to all the Chinese. The best way to attain this goal was through the combined efforts of Chinese and foreigners. The bulk of the preaching and teaching among the ordinary folks could best be done by the Chinese converts themselves while the foreigners could better serve by training the Chinese preachers. As far as the Chinese preachers were concerned, Morrison's plan was to set up a college where young men could be taught English up to a standard sufficient to enable them to read and expound the Scriptures and to get a thorough understanding of the principles of the Christian religion.¹²¹ For this purpose Morrison founded the Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca.¹²²

¹²¹ Lindsay Ride, "Biographical Note" on James Legge in the modern printing of Legge's English translation of the *Chinese Classics* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 1-25. Ride touches on Morrison's policy on mission in China in pp. 5-6.

¹²² Back in 1812, Morrison already had the idea of the formation of a college at Malacca:

"I wish that we had an institution at Malacca for the training of missionaries,

The Chinese students who graduated there could then go back to their several communities and spread the gospel, each through his (or her) own particular native tongue.¹²³ Besides, dictionaries and textbooks of the Chinese

European and Native and designed for all the countries beyond the Ganges. There also, let there be that powerful engine, the Press. The final triumphs of the gospel will, I think, be by means of native missionaries, and the Bible." Cf. Elizabeth Morrison, *Memoir of the Life and Labours of Robert Morrison, D.D., Vol. I* (London: Longmans, 1839), p. 355. Legge also mentioned this in "Notes of My Life", p. 151.

Morrison also gave the following reasons for Malacca as a suitable place for a missionary establishment: It was near China itself, and commanded ready intercourse with all parts of the Archipelago where Chinese have settled; it lay direct between Cochin-China, Siam, and Penang, and possessed a ready intercourse with India and Canton (Guangzhou). It being a quiet place, and the existing authorities (at that time the Dutch) favourably disposed, Morrison contemplated its becoming a central station for missionaries of different countries; and ultimately becoming the seat of a seminary where the Chinese, Malay, and other Ultra-Ganges languages should be cultivated. Morrison's plans also included a retreat for the aged, the widows and orphans of missionaries, and an establishment for the education of the children of the members of the mission. Cf. Elizabeth Morrison, *ibid.*, p. 384. Legge also kept Morrison's view in mind, cf. "Notes of My Life", p. 150.

¹²³ Lindsay Ride, "Biographical Note", p. 6. Cf. Elizabeth Morrison, *ibid.*, pp. 385-387. Similar view on such policy can be found in Walter Henry Medhurst, *China: Its State and Prospects, with Especial Reference to the Spread of the Gospel* (London: John Snow, 1838), p. 361.

language were needed since foreign missionaries ought to master at least one Chinese dialect.

Preparation of such volumes, translation of the Bible into Chinese, plus the running of a printing press for publishing the Bible and religious tracts in Chinese would then be the policy of the mission at Malacca when Legge began to take over.¹²⁴ The present writer would say that Legge not only decided to pursue Morrison's policy after two years of study and trial; he even pressed its execution a few stages further.

In addition, Brian Harrison's position also provides insights for the current discussion.¹²⁵ Harrison points to the frequently clear line drawn between the earlier Catholic missionaries of the 17th and 18th centuries with their generally humane and scholarly approach, and the later Protestant missionaries of the 19th century with their comparatively narrow and intolerant attitude towards the Chinese cultural and intellectual tradition. In Harrison's eyes, this division is somewhat arbitrary. In accordance with such a division, Morrison and Milne have been regarded as representative of the later approach, as being pioneers of the narrow pietist,

¹²⁴ Lindsay Ride, *ibid.*

¹²⁵ Brian Harrison, *Waiting for China*, "Preface", xi-xiv.

evangelical missionaries of the 19th century. From the results of his research, Harrison would argue that Morrison and Milne were in fact very much nearer in spirit to their Catholic predecessors than to their Protestant successors in their missionary approach to China. To a large extent they even shared much of the attitude which the earlier Jesuit missionaries showed towards the Chinese social and cultural tradition, 'an attitude of informed, if restrained, admiration'.¹²⁶ He

¹²⁶ Brian Harrison, *ibid.*, xiii. However, Harrison's viewpoint here also reflects a general opinion that only the Jesuits showed such an favourable attitude towards the Chinese culture heritage. An alternative standpoint presented by J. S. Cummins must not be neglected. Cummins argues well that the mendicant friars, especially the Franciscans, were not entirely different from the Jesuits in approaching non-European cultures. A lot of the Franciscans were influenced by the principles of the great Renaissance thinker Erasmus (1469-1536), advocating sound learning and Christian example in propagating the gospel message. To Cummins, the general picture of the all-accommodating and permissive Jesuit is as overdrawn as is the picture of the harsh, non-compromising friar. Cf. J. S. Cummins, "Two Missionary Methods in China: Mendicants and Jesuits" in *Archivo Ibero-Americano XXXVIII* (Madrid, 1978), pp. 33-108, also in J. S. Cummins, *Jesuit and Friar in the Spanish Expansion to the East* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1986).

Furthermore, the spirit of the Franciscan Order, "plus exemplo quam verbo" ("to teach more by example than by word"), convinced the friars that the Chinese had to be converted through the eyes, not through the ears, i.e., by good example, not argument, cf. J. S. Cummins, pp. 61 and 81. The franciscan also produced figures like Martin de

also contended that the early Protestant missionaries' basic approach in Malacca as well as in Southern China was a much more indirect one. Their aim was to set in motion a whole process of educational and cultural change for the enhancement of the propagation of Christianity in the whole country.¹²⁷ Can then Legge be perfectly fitted into such pattern?

Rada, "the father of modern sinology", and fray Juan Cobo, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 80 and 83.

The present writer is going to present Legge not only as a pioneer in sinological studies in the English-speaking world in his days, but also a significant missionary archetype in presenting the gospel message by word and deed.

¹²⁷ Brian Harrison, *Waiting for China*, xiii. Perhaps some more words of Harrison should be quoted here:

"If in the end of the results of the work of Morrison, Milne and their associates at Malacca were of small account in the strictly missionary field, the educational and cultural assumptions underlying the approach to their work may be seen as having some lasting validity in the sphere of intercultural relations. And if the work of their successors in the missionary field of China itself was likewise narrowly limited in immediate effect, the long-term influence of the Protestant evangelical missionary movement as a whole may be seen as in essence a *revolutionary influence*, as a significant factor in the *ultimate liberation of China* from her past." (*Ibid.*, emphasis by the present writer.)

The above quotation is extremely interesting in relation to this thesis. Brian Harrison in the "Postscript" of *Waiting for China* reflects on the

After the death of John Evans on November 28, 1840, Legge had to take up the post as the Principal of the Anglo-Chinese College. With the advent of the Opium Wars resulting in the unequal treaties between Britain and China, new opportunities were being seen by missionaries

opportunity that Christianity might have when compared with the introduction of Buddhism from India into China during the first or second century A.D.

"It might indeed have done so had the culturally liberal approach of the earlier missionaries, that of the Jesuits in Peking as well as of Morrison and Milne at Canton and Malacca, been sustained. However, time was to show that such an approach, though never entirely lost, would become heavily outweighed and largely counteracted by the increasingly powerful commercial and military pressures of a culturally arrogant West." (Ibid., p. 160).

This thesis is going to argue that Legge represents a distinctive trend of missionary approach to withhold "the increasingly powerful commercial and military pressures of a culturally arrogant West" and to advocate the "revolutionary" role of missionaries. These aspects will be dealt with in later chapters.

On the "revolutionary" influence of Christian missions in China, J. S. Cummins also writes, "... it seems as though the Central Country was always beyond conversion, except through revolution". Cf. J. S. Cummins, "Two Missionary Methods in China: Mendicants and Jesuits", p. 107, Harrison mentions "ultimate liberation of China from her past" and Cummins talks about a China "always beyond conversion, except through revolution". Legge's approach seems to be a direct response to these comments.

as providential.¹²⁸ Hong Kong was ceded to Britain as a colony under the Sino-British agreement. The opening of the Treaty ports was another major break in the eyes of the missionaries. The relocation of the Anglo-Chinese College to China Proper or the Treaty ports suddenly became a real possibility. But the changing of the 'liberal arts' college of 1818 in Malacca to the theological seminary in Hong Kong of 1843 was seen by Harrison as a move 'strongly against Robert Morrison's earlier vision'.¹²⁹ Legge's hope of training his future students more in the field of theology and Biblical studies was labelled as the 'narrowing down of Morrison's purpose'.¹³⁰ Should we now say that Legge has left the

¹²⁸ In a letter dated February 28, 1840, Legge wrote, 'No former period of Chinese history has been so interesting and pregnant with results as the present. Probably it is the prelude to an answer to Valignani's prayer ... The present crisis had a voice to all the churches of Britain ... It is for all its inhabitants to mourn and weep for the desolation and bloodshed ... upon the most densely peopled and defenceless nation on our globe ... but it is for the friends of missions now with strong crying and tries to avert the impending stroke of God's anger at the idolatry of China, and to return into her bosom double for all the affliction which has been and is being brought upon her by those in whom is prostituted the holy name of Jesus ..." Cf. LMS Archives, Ultra Ganges, China-Malacca (Incoming Letters), Box 3, Folder No. 4, Jacket D.

¹²⁹ Brian Harrison, *Waiting for China*, p. 112.

¹³⁰ Ibid. Harrison adds, "Robert Morrison would undoubtedly have deplored this decision, he would surely have poured scorn as those who thus denied the wider educational vision by which both he and

path of Morrison and Milne? To answer this question we must not confine ourselves to the 1840-1843 period but to explore more what Legge has done during his post-Malacca career.¹³¹

Legge as a Missionary in Malacca

Legge and his wife never lost sight of their status as a missionary couple no matter where they might go. Mrs. Legge once wrote, "I do not forget that we are Missionaries ... I hope we do not forget whose servants we are, and to whose works we have devoted ourselves."¹³² As soon as they reached Malacca¹³³ they found themselves

Milne, the founder and the builder, had been inspired." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 113.

¹³¹ Nevertheless, Harrison has to admit that in Legge's later days, Legge's considered judgement on the whole matter of the missionary approach to China was one that would have been accepted by Morrison and Milne, cf. *ibid.*, p. 114. The present writer would like to argue that Legge's contribution to the Christian missions in China and to intercultural relations in the nineteenth century is greatly underrated by Brian Harrison.

¹³² James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 114. Quoted from a letter written by Mrs. Legge, dated October 2, 1839, on their journey to Malacca.

¹³³ James Legge and his wife arrived at Malacca on January 10, 1840. Cf. Legge, *ibid.*, p. 136. Legge also wrote about the political fortune of the place in "Notes of My Life", p. 141. It was founded in 1250 by a company of Malay adventurers and colonists from Sumatra. In 1511 the Portuguese took control of the place under Alfonso Albuquerque (1453-1515). It

at once facing challenges both from missionary work and the management of the Anglo-Chinese College. Legge did feel the heavy burden rested on his shoulders after barely three months. He exhibited his feelings to his brother John in a letter,

A missionary – and above all others, a missionary to the Chinese – stands in imminent danger during the first years of his labour of losing fervency and spirituality. The difficulty, intensity, and engrossment of the studies to which he is compelled, fag and exhaust the mind.¹³⁴

In July 1841, the Council of the University of New York conferred on Legge, by unanimous vote, the degree of Doctor of Divinity.¹³⁵

was later captured by the Dutch in 1641. In 1795 the British gained control but in 1802 it was restored to Holland under the Treaty of Amiens. In 1824, under the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of London, Britain gained complete control of the region and Malacca became one of the original Straits Settlements with Penang and Singapore in 1826.

¹³⁴ Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, p. 15. Quoted from a letter written by Legge to his elder brother, dated March 31, 1840.

¹³⁵ Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, p. 118.

Incidentally, it was during 1840 and 1841 that another prominent LMS missionary, David Livingstone (1813-1873), was ordained and sent to Africa. Influenced by the tracts of one of the pioneers in the mission field in China, Karl F. A. Gützlaff (1803-1851), Livingstone had originally intended to go to China as a medical missionary. It was the

Serving as the head of the College, Legge also had to superintend the printing press which was attached to the College. One of his students at this period was Ho Tsun-sheen (or Ho Fuk-tong, 1818-1871) who later became a very helpful colleague of Legge's ministry.¹³⁶ The chapel of the mission was open on Sundays for service in Chinese, which was available for all who wished to attend. The students of the College always formed part of the congregation.¹³⁷ Legge and Ho established a very close bond between them in these years.¹³⁸ While taking charge of the College, the printing press, and the mission station, Legge began to think of the future prospects of the whole missionary enterprise in China in the light of the Sino-British conflict. "The programme of Dr. Morrison (Robert Morrison) cannot be effected in Malacca, nor out of China", Legge thought. "May it not be possible to transfer it there? The providence of God is doing great things in China ..." If the doors of China were opened,

outbreak of the Opium War (1839-1842) between China and Britain that eventually frustrated his hopes.

¹³⁶ Ho Tsun-sheen (or Ho Tsun-shin, in Pinyin He Jinshan, alias Ho Fuk-tong) and the story of his family circle in relation to James Legge's career will be dealt with in Chapter Four.

¹³⁷ James Legge, "Notes of My Life", p. 140.

¹³⁸ Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen and the Church in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 130.

the great day would have come for the LMS to advance from its stations in Southeast Asia to new forward bases on the coast of China itself. Legge was determined that he should be included in the great forward march rather than be left behind to soldier on at Malacca.¹³⁹

By the end of 1841, it seemed to a outsider that everything concerning about the Malacca Mission was promising. The president of the Morrison Education Society (founded in 1836), Mr. L. Dent, had the following report after his visit to the College.

The College at Malacca, where I was hospitably entertained by Rev. Mr. Legge, I found in as flourishing a condition as could be expected, at this early stage of its progress under the present incumbent. The school has been filled up anew since Mr. Legge took charge of it. ... It had in July about 35 boys, who had been at school only a few months. They were, however, making rapid advances in learning to read. Should the College continue to be under the same superintendence as present, it will, I doubt not, satisfy all the just expectations of its friends.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Brian Harrison, *Waiting for China*, pp. 106-107.

¹⁴⁰ *The Chinese Repository* Vol. X, No. 10 (October, 1841), Article V, "The Third Annual Report of the Morrison Education Society", p. 575.

What Mr. L. Dent had seen is a sharp contrast to the description by Brian Harrison in *Waiting for China*. Quoting Legge's letters to the LMS and its Directors, Harrison points out that Legge had denounced the College and disparaged the work of his predecessors in a torrent of complaint and

Nevertheless, Legge had already determined one thing early in 1841, the idea of moving the College to China as soon as possible. He once wrote to the Trustees of the College advocating his standpoint,

It is impossible that the institution can ever realize the wishes of its founder or yourselves out of China. ... It will be of little use to transfer it to Singapore or any other such station; for there are the same radical objections to the establishment of a great institution everywhere but in China itself or on its immediate borders.¹⁴¹

Legge found one strong ally in this matter, John Robert Morrison (1814-1843), the second son of Robert Morrison.¹⁴² The younger Morrison wanted to see the

criticism. Cf. Harrison, *ibid.*, pp. 105ff; quoting from Legge's letters to Directors, December 2, 1840; Legge to Secretary of LMS, October 23, 1840; Legge to Rev. A. Tidman, December 26, 1840; Legge to Trustees of the Anglo-Chinese College, January 19, and August 17, 1841. All these letters are kept in the LMS Archives, Ultra Ganges, China-Malacca (Incoming Letters), Box 3, Folder No. 4, Jacket D, and Folder No. 5, Jacket A.

On the other hand, one must not forget that Legge was only about twenty-five years old at that time and almost virtually new in his mission field. Therefore the sense of loneliness and frustration might push him into some harsh words that others should not take too seriously at surface value.

¹⁴¹ Brian Harrison, *ibid.*, p. 108. Quoting Legge's letter to the Trustees, dated August 17, 1841.

¹⁴² For a biographical note of John R. Morrison, cf. Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, pp. 10-11, and also G. B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-Book of Early Hong Kong*

College moved to China as a school of higher education in connection with the Morrison Education Society and under its trustees as the local managing committee.¹⁴³ By February 1842 the LMS felt able to assure Legge that it agreed with his view that 'no permanent institution in the nature of an Anglo-Chinese College can be conducted with effect out of China'.¹⁴⁴ Later in the year, he wrote to his brother John that he had already sent the English-Malay printing press and its appurtenances to Singapore. Meanwhile his principal labour was in his College where 30 boys from 10 to 16 years of age and 4 young men were under his instruction. He added in the letter,

I purposely devote myself a great deal to teaching, because it seems to me that a higher walk than at present will be a chief business of my life among the Chinese. This institution will probably remain my care ... established in Hong Kong on a noble basis. ... It will be my task more to train them in theology and Biblical science - to make them under Godly

(Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 1962), pp. 113-114.

¹⁴³ Brian Harrison, *ibid.*, p. 108. Quoting John R. Morrison's letter to W. A. Hankey, Treasurer of the LMS, dated January 25, 1841; Morrison's letter to Directors of the LMS, dated April 30, 1842.

¹⁴⁴ Brian Harrison, *ibid.*, p. 109. Quoting LMS letters to James Legge, dated February 28, 1842.

scribes well instructed for the kingdom of God.¹⁴⁵

Legge as a Missionary in Hong Kong

Legge left Malacca on May 6, 1843 and arrived at Hong Kong on July 10.¹⁴⁶ To the whole missionary cause, the opening of Hong Kong provided both opportunity and difficulty. As an opportunity, it was the first time outside Macau that there was full freedom to practice and to propagate the Christian religion within territory inhabited mainly by Chinese.¹⁴⁷ But the difficulty was also apparent. Since Hong Kong became British territory as a result of war, and unfriendly relations existed

¹⁴⁵ Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, pp. 16-17. Quoting Legge's letter to his brother John, dated October 3, 1842.

¹⁴⁶ Alexander Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 118.

¹⁴⁷ Hong Kong was officially ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Nanking which was signed on August 29, 1842. In addition to this, five treaty ports, including Guangzhou (Canton), Shanghai, Xiamen (Amoy), Ningbo (Ningpo), Fuzhou, had to be opened which later all became important strategic areas for Christian missions. For the brief history of Hong Kong, especially the early stages, cf. G. B. Endacott, *A History of Hong Kong* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958); E. J. Eitel, *Europe in China: the History of Hong Kong from the Beginning to the Year 1882* (Hong Kong: Kelly and Walsh, 1895); G. R. Sayer, *Hong Kong 1841-1862: Birth, Adolescence and Come of Age* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1980).

between the Chinese and the British government, officials in Guangzhou were hardly likely to favour the spreading of Christianity among the Chinese population in Hong Kong.¹⁴⁸ Rev. George Smith (1815-1891), who later became the first Bishop of Victoria in the Colony, had originally rejected Hong Kong as 'totally unsuitable' for the Church Missionary Society missions because of 'the shifting nature and low character of the local population'.¹⁴⁹

Against such adverse circumstances, Legge became one of the earliest Protestant ministers who built up congregations in the colony.¹⁵⁰ He became the 'Father of

¹⁴⁸ G. B. Endacott and D. E. Shea, *The Diocese of Victoria, Hong Kong: A Hundred Years of Church History, 1849-1949* (Hong Kong: Kelly and Walsh, 1949), pp. 1-2.

¹⁴⁹ G. B. Endacott and D. E. Shea, *ibid.*, p. 2 and pp. 6-7. As a matter of fact, the shifting nature of the population of the Colony remains up to the present moment, which has always been related to the turmoil situations in mainland China from time to time.

Cf. Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong*, "Introduction", p. 2. "The first Chinese to come to the new settlement of Victoria on Hong Kong Island did not represent a cross-section of Chinese society. They came for economic advantage or to escape from Chinese jurisdiction. Later, Hong Kong became a refuge for those fleeing disturbances in China."

¹⁵⁰ Carl T. Smith, *ibid.*, pp. 2ff. Most of the missionaries who had been working in the Chinese communities in South-east Asia and those living in Macau came to Hong Kong before moving on to the

the Union Church' as he concerted the efforts of the LMS to build a chapel in the Middle Bazaar in 1844.¹⁵¹ He later became the pastor of the English congregation of

treaty ports. Some of them, like James Legge, remained to establish the Chinese Protestant Church in Hong Kong. James Legge and his wife arrived at Hong Kong on July 6, 1843.

Other prominent Protestant missionaries who arrived early at Hong Kong included the American baptist Issachar Jacox Roberts (1802-1871) who later had close contact with the leaders of the Taiping Tianguo (commonly known as the Taiping Rebellion); and also Karl F. A. Gützlaff, whose missionary tracts had once influenced David Livingstone.

¹⁵¹ All earlier records of the Union Church was burnt during the Second World War. The present writer has visited the re-built Union Church situated at Kennedy Road on Hong Kong Island. There is now still a tablet for commemorating the efforts of James Legge in the church hall. On the tablet one can read: "In memory of James Legge, M.A., D.D., LL.D. Born 20th Dec. 1815 at Huntly, Aberdeenshire. Died 29th Nov. 1897 at Oxford. Aged 82 years. A devoted missionary of the cross of Christ. Founder and for 26 years faithful pastor of this church, A.D. 1844-67 and 1870-73. Professor of Chinese, Oxford, A.D. 1876-97. Author of "The Chinese Classics", "The Religions of China" etc. This tablet has been erected by members and friends of this congregation."

Legge's own "Notes of My Life" covers up to the beginning of the Malacca period, so the present writer has to rely more upon Helen Edith Legge's work which was mainly based on primary sources. However, the rest of this biographical sketch of Legge by the present writer would be more selective since there is no reason to repeat Helen Edith Legge's story once again here. The present writer would try to highlight all those events that would have significant meaning in relation to the major issues of this thesis.

this Union Chapel.¹⁵² At the very beginning he already had Liang A-fa, the first Chinese Protestant minister who was ordained by Robert Morrison in 1821 in Macau, to work with him.¹⁵³ Along with Liang there was also another famous early Chinese Protestant preacher, Ho Tsun-sheen, with whom Legge worked cordially within a colonial setting.¹⁵⁴

He was a missionary in Hong Kong for a span of almost thirty years. Legge's daughter described him as one who joined heart and soul in promoting public schemes for the good of the whole place, and he was "no obscure missionary, no mere oriental scholar, but a genuine statesman, who left the impress of his mind on the infant

¹⁵² Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, pp. 27 and 63. As the founder of the Union Church, Legge became the pastor to the English congregation of the church in 1849.

¹⁵³ Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 49. Cf. James Legge, "Notes of My Life", pp. 155-156, that Liang was not stationed in Hong Kong, but for "two or three years ... he came repeatedly to Hong Kong, and preached to me to Congregations which filled our little Chapel to overflowing. He preached well, and the sermons which he preached were, no doubt his best ... I possess still a volume of his 'Good Words to Admonish the World' [*Quanshi Liangyan*] ..."

The significance of Liang's *Quanshi Liangyan* will be discussed in Chapter Four.

¹⁵⁴ The cordial relationship between Ho and Legge will be dealt with in Chapter Four where Ho will be portrayed as a co-agent of Legge's missionary career in a kind of reciprocal translation.

colony and the men who made."¹⁵⁵ A renowned author in Hong Kong history gave Legge the following credit:

... for he was an influential resident of the Colony for nearly thirty years and closely identified himself with its daily life and its social problems. ... he was prominent in the religious life of the community, and those in authority sought his advice on problems relating to the Chinese, by whom he was highly respected. He was an all-round man: scholar, missionary, minister, chaplain, educationist, and public-spirited citizen.¹⁵⁶

Legge himself recalled that when he arrived at Hong Kong in 1843, he seemed to feel that he had at last found

¹⁵⁵ Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁵⁶ G. B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-Book of Early Hong Kong*, p. 135.

Cf. Lo Hsiang-lin, in *The Role of Hong Kong in the Cultural Interchange between East and West* (Tokyo: The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1963), p. 26, had a similar comment:

"Since he moved to Hong Kong in 1843, James Legge established himself as a good pastor, an industrious scholar, an educationalist, a public spirited citizen, a spiritual counsellor of British troops stationed in Hong Kong, and a regular visitor in his ministrations to prisoners and the poor. He was a man of unselfish enthusiasm and practical industry. ... in his life and work he therefore prominently identified himself with the life of the community."

In the eyes of Chinese and Western historians of Hong Kong, James Legge was clearly a missionary who identified with the local people and cared for the welfare of their whole being.

the home for which he had left Scotland.¹⁵⁷ Incidentally, it was in Hong Kong that Legge has published his monumental translations of the *Chinese Classics* that enhanced his reputation as probably "the most important sinologist of the nineteenth century".¹⁵⁸

As "an all-round man", Legge has devoted his time and energy in serving all sectors of the community in Hong Kong. He spent several hours everyday in visiting the local people from house to house, and shop to shop, conversing with them on all subjects. He would even claim that when he went home in 1867, excepting the brothels, there was hardly a house in Victoria and the villages in which he had not repeatedly been, and where he was not known as a friend.¹⁵⁹ But the unhealthy environment of the Colony in its early stage had an adverse effect on

¹⁵⁷ James Legge, "The Colony of Hong Kong", *China Review* 1:3, p. 163. This article was originally a lecture delivered in the City Hall of Hong Kong on November 5, 1872, centred around Legge's reminiscences of a long residence in the East.

¹⁵⁸ Andrew F. Walls, "Legge, James" in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, p. 477.

Cf. Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, Chapter IV, "Hong Kong and the Chinese Classics", pp. 27-46. The first volume of the *Chinese Classics* was published in 1861 and the fifth volume in 1872. The significance of Legge's translation and scholarship in relation to the missionary cause will be thoroughly discussed in the following chapters.

¹⁵⁹ James Legge, "The Colony of Hong Kong", p. 169.

Legge's body. Successive attacks of fever compelled him to leave the Colony for home in 1845, and he was accompanied by his family, and three young Chinese students.¹⁶⁰ These three Chinese young men were Lee Kim-leen, Ng Mun-sow, Song Hoot-kiam, all students of the Anglo-Chinese College.¹⁶¹ They visited Legge's home church in Huntly and were baptized on October 15, 1847.¹⁶² The baptism of the three boys created great interest in England and Scotland. It served as a sign and token of the promise of the eventual evangelization of the millions of heathen Chinese. The fact that the boys were baptized in the same church from which William Milne, the

¹⁶⁰ G. B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-Book of Early Hong Kong*, p. 137. Cf. Legge's letter to LMS, dated August 16, 1845, in LMS Archives, South China-Incoming Letters, Box 4, Folder No. 4, Jacket E. In Legge's "The Colony of Hong Kong", p. 170, he wrote that he was carried on board ship on November 18, 1845 to make the voyage round the Cape of Good Hope and his friends all supposing that Hong Kong had seen the last of him.

¹⁶¹ Lee, Ng and Song all had been students of the College at Malacca. However they failed to accompany Legge to Hong Kong in 1843. They only managed to arrive at Hong Kong on February 20, 1845 and were able to continue their studies under Legge's direction. See Carl T. Smith, "Dr. Legge's Theological School", *Chung Chi Bulletin*, No. 50 (1971), p. 21, note 13.

¹⁶² Letter from the pastor Rev. John Hill, on behalf of the Congregational Church in Huntly, to their Christian brethren in Hong Kong, dated November 5, 1847. Part of this letter was reprinted in an article "A China-Scotland Centenary", in *The Chronicle*, (November 1947), pp. 231-232.

first principal of the Anglo-Chinese College in Malacca, had gone forth to China, made the event seem particularly significant for the future of the Chinese Mission.¹⁶³ Legge himself recovered rapidly from his illness and arrived back at Hong Kong on July 22, 1848 with his family.¹⁶⁴ In 1849 Legge took charge of the Union Church which had become the responsibility of the London Missionary Society. Legge accepted his call on condition that he could continue to preach on Sundays to his Chinese converts in Chinese. He also became the Presbyterian Chaplain to the Forces. This demanded additional church services on Sundays, attention to the welfare of the troops, and the entertainment of soldiers in his home.¹⁶⁵

Legge suffered from family losses heavily in his early missionary career at Malacca and Hong Kong. His wife, Mary Isabella Morison, died on October 17, 1852 at the age of thirty-six. Of their six children, two daughters were born in Malacca and survived. In Hong Kong, two sons and two more daughters were born. They all

¹⁶³ Carl T. Smith, "Dr. Legge's Theological School", p. 16.

¹⁶⁴ Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, p. 118.

¹⁶⁵ G. B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-Book of Early Hong Kong*, pp. 137-138.

died in their infancy. Their fourth daughter, Anne Murray, died on September 10, 1848, aged only eight months. After his wife's death, Legge had sent his remaining three daughters to Scotland for schooling. The youngest of these three daughters died in 1853.¹⁶⁶ In 1859 Legge married the widow of the Rev. G. Willets, Hannah Mary Johnston, while he was back in England. In 1865 his wife and three children were sent home for health reasons, and two years later he resigned his pastorate to rejoin his family in Britain. The new minister at the Union Church did not last long, and in 1870 Legge was approached to return to Hong Kong and again take over the Church. He accepted for a period of three years, and finally left Hong Kong in 1873.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 138. Cf. Lindsay Ride, "Biographical Note", pp. 8-9; and Mary Dominica Legge, "Address on James Legge to the Sino-Scottish Society of the University of Edinburgh in 1951", fols. 42-43.

¹⁶⁷ G. B. Endacott, *ibid.*

Hannah Mary Johnston, Legge's second wife, has left some of her journals in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and also some of her letters in the LMS archives. For her journals, see Mss. Eng. misc. d. 1230, 1264, in Bodleian. For her letters, they are kept in the LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 10. Hannah Mary Johnston first met Legge personally on June 16, 1847 during a missionary breakfast meeting. Cf. MS. Eng. misc. d. 1264, fol. 62, in Bodleian. Helen Edith Legge was the daughter of Legge's second marriage. Mary Dominica Legge was the daughter of the elder son of Legge's second marriage.

Besides usual evangelizing work among the local Chinese in the Colony, Legge played a dominant role in the development of the Colony's education. Like his Anglican and Catholic confreres, he was at first anxious to use the school as an instrument of missionary work, to introduce the Bible, and to make his college supply students for his seminary. Yet not a single preacher was produced, and eventually, in 1856, the Anglo-Chinese College was closed.¹⁶⁸ During that period, the overall standards in general education were low as the successful organization of primary education was the first need. Legge believed that the Government should give more assistance to Chinese education on a comprehensive and systematic level. Sir John Bowring (1792-1872), the fourth governor of Hong Kong (April 1854 to May 1859), was a secularist in education and was very keen to improve the whole education system. He discussed many

¹⁶⁸ G. B. Endacott, *ibid.* Cf. Carl T. Smith, "Dr. Legge's Theological School", p. 20. Legge did not find it difficult to decide to close the school at a time of strained relationship between the Chinese and foreign community in Hong Kong as the year 1856 ended. The tension was created by the Arrow Iorcha incident in October and the consequent assault on Canton (Guangzhou) by British forces. Cf. also Legge's letter to the LMS, dated January 15, 1857, LMS Archives, South China-Incoming Letters, Box 6, Folder No. 1, Jacket A. This letter also mentions the incident about a Chinese bake who intended to poison the whole English community by putting arsenic into the bread destined for the foreigners. Cf. Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

reform projects, but in fact maintained the existing church control and concentrated on expanding the school population, explaining that the religious bodies were the only ones on whom he could depend.¹⁶⁹ In 1853 Legge was invited to join the Education Committee which had been set up in 1848 by Sir John Francis Davis (1795-1890, second governor of Hong Kong from May 1844 to March 1848) to administer grants to the Chinese vernacular schools. The Education Committee was presided over by the Anglican Bishop George Smith but Legge quickly became one of its most influential and active members.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ G. B. Endacott, *ibid.* Ironically, it is among literature on the history of the education system that one can easily find the entry of James Legge's name. Cf. E. J. Eitel, *Europe in China*, pp. 392-393 and 466; G. B. Endacott, *A History of Hong Kong*, Chapter XIII, "The Growth of a Public System of Education", pp. 132-143. More recent publications include Ng Lun Ngai-ha, *Interactions of East and West: Development of Public Education in Early Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1984); Anthony Sweeting, *Education in Hong Kong Pre-1841 to 1941: Fact and Opinion - Materials for a History of Education in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1990). See also David Walter Vikner, "The Role of Christian Missions in the Establishment of Hong Kong System of Education", a thesis for the degree of doctor of education in Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1987.

¹⁷⁰ G. B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-Book of Early Hong Kong*, p. 138. David Walter Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 173, wrote that the invitation of Legge by the government would mark "the beginning of Dr. Legge's considerable involvement in the formulation of the colonial government's educational policies. Unquestionably, no other Protestant educator in

James Legge came to believe that in Hong Kong Christian schools with an evangelical emphasis at that period were not appropriate. Students, for the most part, were not entering the schools out of any sense of religious conviction, nor were the students leaving with much of a sense of religious commitment. Furthermore, because of limited resources, the schools were unable to provide the quality of education that was becoming more and more essential if the colony was to continue to advance. Thus Legge had become convinced that education in Hong Kong would have to be promoted for its own sake, and that the government was in the best position to offer the kind of education which was necessary. This did not mean to suggest that Legge was proposing that there was to be no Christian dimension to education. He was still deeply committed to the teaching of English and Western subjects where he believed one could more effectively be introduced to "Christianity through Letters".¹⁷¹

nineteenth century Hong Kong would be of comparable influence. Vikner also added, on p. 176, that "once Rev. Legge took up his responsibilities on the Education Committee, on September 13th, 1853, his influence began to extend well beyond the walls of the London Missionary Society's college. His educational philosophy, which had been evolving out of more than a decade of administrative experience, would leave its stamp on the government's educational policy well into the twentieth century."

¹⁷¹ David Walter Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 177. Cf. Carl T. Smith, "Dr. Legge's Theological School", pp. 20-21,

After Legge joined the Education Committee, in the autumn of 1853, it was only through his determination that English teaching was first introduced in two of the five government schools.¹⁷² It was James Legge's

on Legge's later reflection on theological education and general education:

... I must say that the Theological Seminary, so far as the special object contemplated by it was concerned, proved a failure. Of the seventeen young men who were received into it, not one went forward to be a preacher ... The time for a Theological Seminary ... had not come. I am afraid that for years yet missionaries must try to train up native preachers and pastors in a different way and on a less comprehensive scale, contented to have them well versed in Chinese Scriptures without the enlargement of the mind which an acquaintance with the English language, and the stores of knowledge which it contains would give. But if the Theological Seminary failed, I may say next that it was far otherwise with the school. From first to last the pupils amounted to about seventy boys. ... Nearly a third of them made a profession of Christianity ... They have shown great strength of principle, maintaining their integrity, and holding a quiet, onward course of consistency and usefulness. I believe there are few schools in England of which the results, so far as comparison of widely different conditions can be drawn, have turned out more satisfactorily.

Quoted from *China Mail*, May 1, 1867, letter of Legge printed in the Report of the Morrison Education Society.

¹⁷² David Walter Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 178. Cf. Ng Lun Ngai-ha, *Interactions of East and West*, p. 30 note 43.

conviction that English should be taught not only for the value of its literature but to prevent misunderstanding and to act as a bond of union between the many thousands of Chinese who had made Hong Kong their residence and the handful of Europeans by whom they were governed.¹⁷³ The Education Committee in its 1854 report contained pungent criticisms of the existing system and suggestions for reform. Four proposals were made for remedy: suitable school buildings should be provided; a system of apprentice teachers should be introduced; all schools capable of enlargement should have assistant masters capable of teaching English; an Inspector of Schools should be appointed to conduct weekly inspections of all government schools. In May 1857 a Germany missionary, Rev. William Lobscheid, was appointed Inspector of Schools and at once began a system of inspections in which he was often accompanied by members of the committee.¹⁷⁴ However, behind the scene there was a

¹⁷³ G. B. Endacott, *A History of Hong Kong*, p. 137. Cf. David Walter Vikner, *ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ G. B. Endacott, *ibid.*, p. 138.

Rev. Wilhelm Lobscheid arrived at Hong Kong on May 22, 1848 as a worker of the Rhenish Missionary Society. He later became an agent of the Chinese Evangelization Society and in 1857 his connection with the society was dissolved. Cf. Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to Chinese*, p. 184.

Endacott put the date of Lobscheid's appointment as May 1856 but from the sources of E. J. Eitel, Ng Lun

dispute between the members of the committee which eventually led to the formation of a new committee before the appointment of Lobscheid as the Inspector. In February 1857, when the Governor Sir John Bowring promised to grant the Education Committee's request to establish the office of an inspector, he set out the condition that "his duties should be defined and his appointment associated with some definite organization". The committee found that the duties could be defined; it was the Christian nature of the organization that created difficulties. Rev. M. C. Odell, the Bishop's Chaplain, openly expressed the wish to preserve the existing arrangement of putting the Anglican Bishop of Victoria in charge of the government schools and using these schools as feeders for the episcopal institution, St. Paul's College. Legge strongly opposed this plan, and wished that the Education Committee might be rid of the influence of the Bishop and that a layman might be appointed as inspector. He felt that the time had come to place the schools under direct government supervision, and he also reintroduced his idea of founding a well endowed central school to complement the existing village

Ngai-ha, and David Walter Vikner, the date should be corrected as 1857. Cf. Eitel, *ibid.*, p. 342; Ng, *ibid.*, p. 39; Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 185.

schools.¹⁷⁵ But Governor Bowring was convinced that Hong Kong was still not ready for Rev. Legge's plan and allowed the Church of England to maintain its preponderant role in the field of education. When the Governor nominated a new Education Committee in early 1857 to reflect this orientation, Rev. M. C. Odell sent in his resignation on March 4 and handed the sole charge of the government schools to Legge. But then Legge, after personal consultation with the Governor, forwarded his own resignation three weeks later. Legge's resignation showed that, even with the support of the Governor, it was still impossible at that time for him to rid the government schools of the influence of the English established church.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ Ng Lun Ngai-ha, *ibid.*, p. 38; cf. David Walter Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 183.

The original members of the Education Committee in 1856 were: Bishop George Smith (Anglican Bishop of Hong Kong who was back to England that year), Rev. James Legge and Rev. M. C. Odell. St. Paul's College was founded by the Colonial Chaplain, Rev. V. J. Stanton, in 1844. In 1852, after the Bishop had been appointed Chairman of the Education Committee, the practice was introduced whereby the top students in the new semi-annual examinations would be promoted to St. Paul's. It was most apparent that the Education Committee had not only evolved into a Christian organization, but also into an Anglican organization. Cf. Vikner, *ibid.*, pp. 168 and 184.

¹⁷⁶ Ng Lun Ngai-ha, *ibid.*; cf. Vikner, *ibid.*, pp. 183-184.

Governor Sir John Bowring retired in 1859. The next Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson (1824-1897) who governed the Colony from September 1859 to March 1865, organized a completely new committee, a Board of Education, to provide modifications in the colony's school system. In the *Government Gazette* of January 21, 1860, the Governor's appointments were announced, and another chapter in the development of Hong Kong's system of education began.¹⁷⁷ "Taking a more prominent position, and striking out a new path, Dr. Legge came forward as an education reformer," wrote E. J. Eitel. Eitel added, that Legge set to work with the support of Sir Hercules Robinson to convert all the Government Schools, which had hitherto been conducted in the interest of religious education, into professedly secular institutions. Though Bishop George Smith retained the nominal chairmanship of the Board of Education, Legge was actually "the presiding spirit of the Board and ruled it with the ease and grace of a born bishop".¹⁷⁸ Exercising his influence, Legge proposed his reform scheme and it was to become "a

¹⁷⁷ Ng, *ibid.*, p. 39; cf. Vikner, p. 191; G. B. Endacott, *A History of Hong Kong*, p. 139; E. J. Eitel, *Europe in China*, p. 392.

¹⁷⁸ E. J. Eitel, *ibid.*

momentous turning point for education in Hong Kong".¹⁷⁹ With the absence of Bishop George Smith, at the meeting on September 6, 1860, the Board of Education unanimously approved "Dr. Legge's Plan" and forwarded it to the Colonial Secretary for submission to the Governor.¹⁸⁰ The plan was seen by E. J. Eitel as "a non-conformist liberation scheme which preferred secularism to episcopatism".¹⁸¹ After many years of service as a missionary in the East, Legge understood Chinese culture well enough and was sufficiently concerned about the future of both Hong Kong and China to be convinced that if schools could not advance the goals of conversion and academic exchange, at least they could provide the kind of quality education that was becoming so imperative. It was this conviction that led to James Legge's proposals to the Board of Education.¹⁸² The four fundamental features of Legge's scheme were:

First, the government schools in the Colony would be consolidated into one central school which would provide a more advanced and a higher quality of education.

¹⁷⁹ Legge's plan was officially formulated and ready for consideration by the Board of Education on July 11, 1860. Cf. Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 195.

¹⁸⁰ Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 197.

¹⁸¹ E. J. Eitel, *ibid.*; cf. Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 200.

¹⁸² Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 198-199.

Second, the central school would emphasize training in English in addition to the traditional Chinese instruction which the students would receive.

Third, greater emphasis would be given to the supervision of the teachers in the village schools where instruction would follow the traditional Chinese syllabus.

Fourth, a European Master would be appointed who would be responsible for the superintendency of all government schools and for the management of the central school.¹⁸³

Sir Hercules Robinson approved Legge's plan on January 6, 1861 and the Legislative Council of the Colony endorsed the scheme on March 25 of the same year.¹⁸⁴ Then on April 10, James Legge sent a circular letter on behalf of the Board of Education to the Registrar of London University and the Principals of the University of Aberdeen and the University of Edinburgh requesting that each of them submit the names of two candidates qualified to carry the dual responsibilities of Headmaster of the

¹⁸³ Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 199; cf. Ng Lun Ngai-ha, *ibid.*, pp. 41-42; G. B. Endacott, *ibid.*, pp. 139-140.

¹⁸⁴ E. J. Eitel, *ibid.*; cf. Vikner, p. 201.

Central School and Supervisor of Hong Kong's village schools. Legge wrote:

The Headmaster will be expected to acquire the Chinese language, without a knowledge of which he cannot fill the situation efficiently ... Under the right man the Institution will not only benefit the Chinese population of the Colony but tell powerfully on the enlightenment and progress of the adjoining Continent.¹⁸⁵

Apparently Legge's educational ideal could not be separated from his vision of an enlightened China. Such vision remained as Legge's major concern in his extraordinary contribution in the cause of Chinese scholarship, translation and evangelization.¹⁸⁶ In 1862,

¹⁸⁵ Vikner, *ibid.*, pp. 201-202. Quoted from E. J. Eitel, *Materials for a History of Education in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: China Mail Office, 1891), p. 26. Cf. Ng Lun Ngai-ha, *ibid.*, p. 78, note 40. Quoting from minutes of the Legislative Council Meetings (special summons) on March 23, 1861, that Legge made the following statement in presenting his scheme:

This plan makes the teaching of English a more prominent part of the education in the Government schools than it has hitherto been. But I beg to submit to you that it ought to be so. It ought to be so in this Colony where the administration of Justice is concluded in the English language. It ought to be so, that an influence may go forth from the Island, which shall be widely felt in China enlightening and benefiting many of its people.

¹⁸⁶ Legge's vision of China and his achievement in scholarship, translation and evangelization will be fully dealt with in later chapters of this thesis.

the Central School was opened under the headmastership of Frederick Stewart (1838-1889), a graduate from King's College at the University of Aberdeen in 1859 with first class honours in Intellectual and Moral Science.¹⁸⁷ Serving also as the Inspector of Schools, Stewart laboured for almost twenty years as the faithful disciple of Legge in maintaining the reign of secularism in the sphere of local education. Under Stewart's disciplinarian regime the Government Central School gradually became a highly popular institution and retained its hold upon public favour from his days onwards.¹⁸⁸ James Legge himself served as the Acting Chairman of the Board of Education in 1862 and then Chairman from 1863 to 1865.¹⁸⁹ On June 13, 1865, Legge and other members of the Board resigned and on June 24 Frederick Stewart was appointed

¹⁸⁷ Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 202. Quoting from S. S. Stokes, *Queen's College, 1862-1962* (Hong Kong: The Standard Press Ltd., 1962), p. 16. The Central School was later renamed as Victoria College in 1889. Its new name was suggested by Sir George F. Bowen, the Governor of Hong Kong from March 1883 to December 1885. Then in 1894 its name was changed to Queen's College. Cf. G. B. Endacott, *A History of Hong Kong*, pp. 210 and 237-238.

¹⁸⁸ E. J. Eitel, *ibid.*, pp. 392-393. Frederick Stewart resigned in 1881 and later also filled the positions of Police Magistrate and Coroner, Acting Colonial Secretary, Registrar-General and Colonial Secretary. Cf. Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 203. Cf. Ng Lun Ngai-ha, *ibid.*, p. 48, note 5.

¹⁸⁹ Ng Lun Ngai-ha, *ibid.*, p. 45; cf. Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 194.

Head of the Department of Government Schools in place of the Board. The government schools became the affair of a branch of the civil service directly responsible to the Governor.¹⁹⁰ Legge's scheme proposed a concentration of English teaching in the Central School but the Chinese curriculum was not neglected. For the Chinese curriculum, the *Four Books* except the *Great Learning* were included for the preparatory class. That would mean the *Confucian Analects*, *The Doctrine of the Mean* and the *Works of Mencius* had to be taught to the junior students. For the upper classes *Wu-ching* (or *Wujing*, *Five Classics*), *ku-wen* (or *guwen*, classical prose), *wen-chang* (or *wenzhang*, literary style), and *Shih-chih* (or *Shiji*, *Book of Records*) had to be taught. Besides the Chinese curriculum, concentration on English reading, spelling, elementary writing and translation covered the whole course of study in the Central School before 1865. After 1864, elementary arithmetic, history and geography were added; and in 1869 simple elements of science (chemistry and the study of electricity) were added under the influence of the then Governor Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell, who governed the Colony from March 1866 to

¹⁹⁰ Ng, *ibid.*, p. 46; cf. Vikner, *ibid.*, p. 204.

April 1872. In 1871 music and mathematical drawing were also introduced into the curriculum.¹⁹¹

After 1865, with Frederick Stewart as the newly appointed Head of the Department of Education. Legge's involvement in the reform of the educational system of the Colony gradually declined. Nevertheless, both Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell, the two governors who administered the Colony from 1859 to 1872, had a high opinion of Legge. They consulted him on matters relating to the local Chinese community. Robinson submitted a draft of his cadet scheme for supplying the consular service in China with the necessary Chinese language training to Legge for his comments. Eventually when the scheme was put into practice, the first recruits, (C. C. Smith, W. M. Deane, and M. S. Tonnochy), were placed under Legge's tutorship.¹⁹² In November 1865, Legge was presented at Government House with a silver tea and coffee service from the Government of Hong Kong 'for many valuable public services readily and gratuitously rendered'. On that occasion Legge talked about three things that struck him as greatly needed when he became resident of the Colony. First, that many of its public

¹⁹¹ Ng, *ibid.*, pp. 65-66.

¹⁹² G. B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-Book of Hong Kong*, p. 139.

offices should be filled by those who could speak the Chinese language. Second, that the Government should assist education among the Chinese on a generous, comprehensive and far-reaching plan. For these two subjects Legge had the satisfaction to find them substantially adopted and successfully carried out under the incumbency of the Governor Sir Hercules Robinson. The third subject which pressed on him was the desirableness of Christian instruction being given to the heathen inmates of the prisons and given regularly and systematically. For many years a Christian service had been conducted by Legge and his colleagues on the Sabbath with the prisoners.¹⁹³ Thirty years after he first set foot on Hong Kong, he still kept on reminding the congregation of the Union Church to maintain the good work done in the gaol and the hospitals. He admonished them to adopt "some well digested plan for the benefit of the many strayed and lost", and "to help those who have no will to help themselves" in his last sermon in Hong

¹⁹³ Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, p. 158. The first two subjects were also reiterated by James Legge in his lecture in the City Hall of Hong Kong on November 5, 1872, cf. "The Colony of Hong Kong", p. 173.

Kong.¹⁹⁴ The poor, the needy, and the marginalized ones were always in the minds of Legge.

Legge was also consulted by Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell over his legislation of 1866 and 1867 providing for closer supervision over the Chinese ashore and afloat.¹⁹⁵ When Sir Richard proposed the plan of licensing gambling houses, Legge organized a widely signed memorial against it on February 12, 1871. The memorial, bearing over three hundred signatures, represented every class of society and expressed the strong protest of the community against Sir Richard's scheme. Eventually the licensing system was abandoned immediately after the Governor's return from England on December 8, 1871.¹⁹⁶ In 1872, the Police Commission was set up by Sir Richard and it broadly agreed to recommend an Anglo-Chinese police force with more men and better pay and conditions. Legge himself gave evidence before the Police Commission, advocating the recruitment of more Chinese into the police force, and arguing that the

¹⁹⁴ James Legge, sermon on March 23, 1873, LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 6.

Cf. G. B. Endacott, *ibid.*, p. 140. "Legge became prison visitor, and took an exceptional interest on prisoners, and in jail preaching, regarding it as an essential part of his missionary activity."

¹⁹⁵ G. B. Endacott, *ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ G. B. Endacott, *ibid.*; cf. Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 161 and E. J. Eitel, *ibid.*, p. 440.

police must know the Chinese habits and language, and must have the respect of law-abiding Chinese. Sir Arthur Kennedy, who was the Governor of Hong Kong from April 1872 to March 1877, began to adopt Legge's idea of a Chinese police for a predominantly Chinese community.¹⁹⁷ G. B. Endacott used the following words to conclude his biographical sketch on Legge:

What stands out this great man is his astonishing vitality, his devotion to the Chinese, his deep religious convictions, and his interest in the daily affairs of the Colony. Almost to the time of his death his devotion to his work and his tireless industry drove him to begin his day at three a.m.¹⁹⁸

In 1873 Legge bade a final farewell to Hong Kong. But before leaving China itself he had set his heart on going north and seeing at least five great sights, namely the Tomb of Confucius, the Altar of Heaven, the Great Wall, the Ming Tombs, and Taishan, the sacred mountain of

¹⁹⁷ James Legge, "The Colony of Hong Kong", p. 168. Cf. G. B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-Book of Hong Kong*, p. 140 and *A History of Hong Kong*, p. 160.

¹⁹⁸ G. B. Endacott, *A Biographical Sketch-Book of Hong Kong*, p. 140.

China.¹⁹⁹ Legge left Hong Kong on March 29, 1873 and reached Beijing on April 16.²⁰⁰ He found that the finest sight of the capital of China was the Altar of Heaven. "I never felt under a more holy awe than when I was there. I took off my shoes at the steps leading to the first terrace, feeling that I was treading on holy ground ... and there we praised the Doxology".²⁰¹ When he visited the Tomb of Confucius at the District City of K'ëuh-fow (Qufu) on May 17, he thought that Confucius was the greater man than Napoleon.²⁰² After visiting North China Legge went to Japan and America, and he finally arrived at Liverpool on August 24, 1873.²⁰³

Legge's Oxford Era

Helen Edith Legge's biographical work on James Legge concluded with its final chapter, "Later years in

¹⁹⁹ Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, chapter XIII, "A Tour in North China", pp. 177-203. Helen Edith Legge account was based on the typed manuscripts by James Legge, "Journey in North China and America" and "Notes of a Tour round the World", in LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 7.

²⁰⁰ James Legge, "Notes of a Tour round the World", pp. 2 and 7.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14. However Helen Edith Legge did not record this in her book.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 17. Cf. Legge, "Journey in North China and America", p. 44; Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 197.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

England".²⁰⁴ After returning to Britain in 1873, Legge stayed at Dollar, Scotland, for a year and then moved to London. In 1875 he received the distinction of being the first recipient of the Julien prize.²⁰⁵ Moreover, the final chapter of Legge's life turned out to be something special. Around the time that Legge received the Julien prize, a committee was formed to found a Chinese Professorship at Oxford under the promotion of Alfred Howell and J. B. Taylor. The Chairman was Sir Rutherford Alcock, K. C. B., late Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in China, and the Committee included Sir John Davies, Bart., K. C. B., late Governor of Hong Kong and Chief Superintendent of Trade in China, Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Shadwell, K. C. B., W. T. Mercer, Esq., late Colonial Secretary and Acting Governor, Hong Kong, Charles Winchester, Esq., late H. M. Consul, China, and Chargé d'Affaires in Japan, the Venerable Archdeacon Gray, and several influential merchants. Alfred Howell and J. B. Taylor also acted as Honorary Secretaries of

²⁰⁴ Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, chapter XIV, pp. 204-232.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 204. Stanislas Julien, who filled the Chair of Chinese at the University of Paris, instituted, shortly before his death, an annual prize of 1500 francs to be awarded to the person who should have published the most valuable work on Chinese literature. The first award was adjudged by the 'Académie des Inscriptions et des Belles Lettres' to Legge for his translations of the *Chinese Classics*.

the Committee.²⁰⁶ Howell and Taylor wrote on November 1876, stating the case of the foundation of the Chinese Professorship at Oxford:

In view of the importance of our commercial interests in China, and the advantage to be derived from a more general knowledge of the language and literature of the Chinese ... A statute was promulgated at the University of Oxford on the 22th February, appointing Dr. Legge, Professor of Chinese at the University.

Dr. Legge, during a residence of thirty-five years in China, has acquired a profound knowledge of its language and literature, and possess in no ordinary degree the qualifications necessary for the appointment ...

... In political and religious, no less than in commercial objects, and a familiar acquaintance with the classic authors of China, this has been long recognized by other Governments and by Universities on the Continent, and it is strange, if not unaccountable, that the country which has the largest interest at stake in the Far East ... and the most richly endowed Universities in the world — should have been most backward in promoting the study of Oriental languages generally, and of Chinese in particular.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 205-206.

²⁰⁷ "Papers relating to the foundation of the Professorship of Chinese at Oxford, and its first holder, James Legge, 1863-94", fols. 14, 16, 18, 20, MS. Top. Oxon. c. 528, in Bodleian Library at Oxford.

On October 27, 1876, Legge delivered his Inaugural Lecture at the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford.²⁰⁸ In this lecture Legge paid tribute to Robert Morrison, described Morrison as the "first Englishman that distinguished himself by his attainments in Chinese" and "the pioneer of English-speaking sinologists".²⁰⁹ Legge also released his feelings under such an occasion:

... During all the years I was in China, I often wished that there were Chairs for its language and literature in the great universities of this country. That I should myself occupy one of them did not enter into my thoughts. When this was first suggested about eighteen months ago, I was as one that dreamed ...²¹⁰

While becoming the first Professor of Chinese at Oxford, Legge also became the first non-conformist and first scholar not a member of Oxford or Cambridge to be appointed to a chair.²¹¹ Legge settled at Oxford very well. He once wrote to a friend. "Next to Hong Kong,

²⁰⁸ The lecture was published in pamphlet form as *Inaugural Lecture, on the Construction of a Chinese Chair in the University of Oxford; Delivered in the Sheldonian Theatre, October 27, 1876*. (Oxford and London: James Parker and Co., 1876).

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 3.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 27.

²¹¹ Mary Dominica Legge, "Address Legge to the Sino-Scottish Society" (1951), fol. 45.

Oxford is the most delightful place in the world."²¹² On looking back at what Legge already accomplished, it is difficult to believe that he would ever work harder or achieve more in the realm of scholarship than he had already done. But this is what actually did happen. In the classroom, in his study, in the lecture hall and on his rambles over the gentle countryside, he studiously and carefully planted seeds of knowledge in the minds of his students, and through his unceasing stream of publications, he fed just as liberally the minds of sinologues the world over.²¹³ Furthermore, Legge not established himself as a renowned sinologist only in Oxford. He continued to care about China. In 1877, when the first conference of Protestant missionaries on a national scale was held in Shanghai, Legge was invited to present a paper on Confucianism. Legge wrote the paper "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" and it was read at the Conference by another LMS missionary, William Muirhead. However, the paper touched on the hotly debated question about the proper Chinese term to be used for the translation of God, and eventually the paper was not

²¹² Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 207. Also quoted by Lindsay Ride, *ibid.*, p. 19.

²¹³ Lindsay Ride, *ibid.* Cf. Appendix I for the major public lectures delivered by Legge during his Oxford days.

included in the official proceedings of the Conference.²¹⁴ Apart from this, Legge showed his concern about famine relief in China. The greatest famine between 1856 and 1897 in China was that which in 1876-1878 had its centre in Shantung (Shandong) and Chihli (modern name Hebei) and in 1877-1879 in Shansi.²¹⁵ Legge was involved in the project of famine relief in China by publishing materials in Britain to call for support from different sectors of society.²¹⁶

In the summer of 1878 Legge went to the Oriental Congress in Florence. He was the President of the Chinese Section.²¹⁷ As the Professor of Chinese at Oxford, Legge translated other major ancient Chinese literature at the

²¹⁴ The fully story of this incident will be dealt with in Chapter Three of this thesis.

²¹⁵ K. S. Latourette, *A History of Christian Missions in China*, p. 464.

²¹⁶ One of the publications relating Legge's contribution in famine relief in China that the present writer could find is *The Famine in China: Illustrations by a Native Artist with a Translation of the Chinese Text* ("Pictures illustrating the Terrible Famine in Honan [Henan] that might draw tears from Iron", with translation by the Rev. James Legge). This publication was issued by the Committee of the China Famine Relief Fund and the publisher was London, C. Kegan Paul and Co., 1878. The Chairman of the Committee of the China Famine Relief Fund in London was Sir Rutherford Alcock.

²¹⁷ "Incidents Relating to Dr. Legge", p. 2. A typed manuscript in LMS Archives, China-Personal Paper, J. Legge, Box 7. Cf. Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 206.

request of Professor F. Max Müller.²¹⁸ From 1879 to 1891 Legge has contributed six volumes to Müller's series of *The Sacred Books of the East*, including texts of Confucianism and Taoism.²¹⁹ In 1884 Legge published *Christianity and Confucianism Compared in their Teaching of the Whole Duty of Man*.²²⁰ In the same year, he also visited Scotland to attend the tercentenary celebrations of the University of Edinburgh, when the degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him.²²¹ In 1886, *A Record of Buddhist*

²¹⁸ Letters between Legge and Friedrich Max Müller are kept in "Papers relating to the foundation of the Professorship of Chinese at Oxford", fols. 135-160, 169-218. MS. Top. Oxon. c. 528, Bodleian Library.

²¹⁹ Legge's works formed vols. 3, 16, 27, 28, 39 and 40 of *The Sacred Books of the East* edited by Müller. A more thorough discussion of these works can be found in later chapters of this thesis.

²²⁰ A pamphlet published by the Religious Tract Society in London. Almost from the very beginning of his missionary career, Legge had been a correspondent and valuable adviser of the Religious Tract Society, and for years acted as honorary secretary of the Hong Kong Auxiliary. Cf. Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 19 and 64-65.

²²¹ A letter from the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh inviting Legge to receive the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws on April 17, 1884 at the Festival of the Tercentenary of the Foundation of the University can be found in the LMS Archives, China-Personal, J. Legge, Box 9. Cf. Mary Dominica Legge, "Address on James Legge to the Sino-Scottish Society" (1951), fol. 45, that Legge received his honour along with Ferdinand de Lesseps (1805-1894) who built the Suez Canal in the 1860s. Mary Dominica Legge also noted that his grandfather received another honorary degree of LL.D. from the University of Aberdeen way back in 1870, cf. *ibid.*

Kingdoms was published which reflected Legge's interest in Buddhism. Legge also produced another book which was based on his own lectures in 1888, *The Nestorian Monument of Hsi-an Fu*. In this work Legge not only translated the content of the monument into English but also gave a thought-provoking account of the earlier Christian missions in China.²²² Apart from Legge's lectures and the major publications mentioned above, he also wrote a lot of articles concerning Chinese history, Chinese ancient literature and various topics about China.²²³ He also

²²² *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms* (1886) and *The Nestorian Monument of Hsi-an Fu* (1886) will be touched upon again in the following chapters of this thesis.

A letter dated December 17, 1886 was sent to the Permanent Secretary of the 'Académie des Inscriptions et des Belles Lettres' from Legge along with Legge's translation of the *Li Ki*, vols. 27 and 28 of *The Sacred Books of the East* (1885), and *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms*. In that letter Legge asked the Secretary to submit these books at the meeting for the next award of the Julien prize, "hoping that again I may obtain the distinction of its being awarded to me". Cf. "Incidents relating to Dr. Legge", p. 9, typed manuscript in the LMS Archives, China-Personal, J. Legge, Box 7.

²²³ Among various articles written by Legge, "The Li Sao Poem and its Author" in three parts which appeared in *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, January, July, October, 1895, pp. 77-92, pp. 571-599, pp. 839-864, deserved special mention. Henri Cordier, a French contemporary Sinologist of Legge, wrote a letter to thank Legge for his paper on the *Li Sao* and he hoped that the whole of the *Chu Ci* ("Elegy of Chu") would be translated. The content of the letter, which was

spoke on the area of mission in different occasions which clearly demonstrated his continuous concern about the cause of evangelization. Legge sometimes spoke from his experience in China and his understanding of the religions of China in relation to the missionary cause.²²⁴ Though occupied with his scholarly work, Legge could still find time to serve the community at Oxford. In October 1891, he procured and presented a spinning wheel and iron crucifix from Scotland to the Pitt Rivers Museum of the Oxford University.²²⁵

Legge began to write "Notes of My Life" on March 15, 1896 for his sons and daughters.²²⁶ By that time "Professor Legge was known and loved in Oxford as an old man, unaffectedly simple, kind and true, living the life of a quiet scholar at his home, No. 3 Keble Road".²²⁷ Failing health during the last year of his life interrupted his habit of rising about 3 a.m., but still

dated November 15, 1895, can be found in "Incidents relating to Dr. Legge", pp. 8-9.

²²⁴ An Obvious example would be his sermon preached at a Christian Conference on November 15, 1886, entitled "The Bearing of our Knowledge of Comparative Religion on Christian Missions". A 14-page manuscript of this sermon can be found in the LMS Archives, China-Personal, J. Legge, Box 4.

²²⁵ "Incidents relating to Dr. Legge", p. 7.

²²⁶ "Notes of My Life", cf. note 41 of this chapter.

²²⁷ Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 228.

he kept it up until the end of October 1897. About three weeks later he was seized with sudden illness and collapse, and after a few days of unconsciousness he passed away on November 29.²²⁸ Legge was buried in the Oxford Corporation Wolvercote Cemetery in plot No. 79 Section C1, on December 3, 1897. The remains of his second wife, Hannah Mary, who had been buried in St. Sepulchres Cemetery were removed under licence of the Secretary of State and re-interred along with her husband at the same time as he was buried.²²⁹ On the day of Legge's burial, a memorial service was conducted in the chapel of Mansfield College, Oxford. The funeral service was attended by representatives of a wide range of societies and churches outside the university.²³⁰ Rev. A.

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 229.

²²⁹ Lindsay Ride, "Biographical Note", pp. 22-23. Hannah Mary, Legge's second wife, died on June 21, 1881. This couple were joined by their faithful daughter Helen Edith on March 6, 1946 in their family grave. Helen Edith was born on February 29, 1860 and died on March 4, 1946.

²³⁰ Cf. "The Late Professor Legge. Funeral at Oxford. Address by Dr. Fairbairn", *The Independent and Nonconformist* (December 9, 1897), p. 432. Besides the academic community of Oxford, there were representatives of the Royal Asiatic Society, the London Missionary Society, the Congregational Union, the Anti-Opium Society, the Oxford Union of Free Churches, the George-street, Cowley-road and Summerton Congregational Churches, the Religious Tract Society and a deputation from the Central School.

M. Fairbairn, D.D., Principal of Mansfield College, delivered the funeral address in which he said: "James Legge had a rare largeness and simplicity of nature, and was distinguished by the dignity which never fails to adorn the single-minded man".²³¹ A letter from the Acting Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society, Rev. George Cousins (originally Editorial Secretary of the Society), dated December 15, 1897, had the resolution of the Board of Directors of the Society on Legge endorsed in it:

... after prolonged and fruitful work at Oxford as the Professor of Chinese (in which important sphere he gave abundant evidence to the last of his unabated interest in the work of Foreign Missions generally, and in that of the London Missionary Society in particular) the Directors cannot but reiterate their appreciation of his great worth, and distinguished life and labours ... [the Directors] rejoice in the permanent and wide-reaching nature of his life's work, and are glad that, after retirement from service abroad, he still served the Society as a Director, and in many other ways furthered its aims.²³²

At the end of his life, Legge still received recognition by the missionary society he once served. He

The paper-cutting of this article can be found in the LMS Archives, China-Personal, J. Legge, Box 9.

²³¹ Ibid. Cf. Lindsay Ride, *ibid.*, p. 23.

²³² The letter can be found in the LMS Archives, China-Personal, J. Legge, Box 9.

was not only a great scholar in the field of sinological studies and the Professor of Chinese at Oxford, he was also seen by his colleagues in the field of mission as a champion of foreign missions.

CHAPTER TWO: LEGGE'S SCHOLARSHIP AND TRANSLATION IN RELATION TO EVANGELIZATION

The Vision of James Legge

I have brought to the work a competent Chinese scholarship, the result of more than five and twenty years of toilsome study. Such a work was necessary in order that the rest of the world should really know this great Empire and also that especially our missionary labours among the people should be conducted with sufficient intelligence and so as to secure permanent results. I consider that it will greatly facilitate the labours of future missionaries that the entire books of Confucius should be published with a translation and notes.¹

The words of James Legge himself clearly show that to him, Chinese scholarship, translation of the classical texts, and evangelization of the Chinese people were closely tied together. On many other occasions, Legge reiterated his motive behind his pursuit of excellence in Chinese scholarship and his brilliant translation of the Chinese Classics along with other texts of ancient Chinese wisdom. For the permanent success of the missionary endeavour, "all the classical books of the Chinese, covering the whole field of thought through

¹ James Legge's words written in Hong Kong on April 30, 1866; quoted in Lindsay Ride's "Biographical Note", p.1.

which the sages of China had ranged, and containing the foundations of the religious, moral, social and political life of the people, should be translated and discussed" more fully and critically than single books had hitherto been dealt with by individuals.²

The setting up of the Chair of the Chinese Language and Literature at the University of Oxford in 1876, in Legge's observation, was not merely "an important epoch in the history of the science of language, but also an important auxiliary to the maintenance of peace, and a good understanding between two great nations."³ Obviously, Legge always had in his mind the image of China as a great nation, at least an equal to his own home country. Again in his published letter to the editor of the series *The Sacred Books of the East*, Professor Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900), in 1880 he poured out his mind with the following words:

... I entered nearly forty years ago on a careful examination of the classical books of China with no other purpose but to qualify myself to fulfil to the best advantage the duties of a missionary. When I began to publish the result of my studies, I had the benefit of

² James Legge, *Inaugural Lecture* (1876), p. 26.

³ Ibid., p. 25.

missionaries more than of any other class of possible readers in my mind.⁴

As the first volume of his great translation appeared in Hong Kong in 1861, he wrote in the Preface:

It [the translation] originated in the author's feeling of his own wants. He has translated, annotated, and reasoned, always in the first place to satisfy himself. He hopes that the volumes will be of real service to Missionaries and other students of the Chinese language and literature. They have been foremost in his mind as those whom he wished to benefit.⁵

Besides missionaries and students of the Chinese language and literature, Legge also thought of the general reader. Since the Chinese has been, (and still is), the largest family of mankind, the work would enable all thoughtful minds in other parts of the world to understand what the minds of millions of Chinese people had lived upon for thousands of years. Legge wrote that he would give his views on the scope and value of the contents in his prolegomena to the several volumes. He hoped that though some might differ from his opinions, he would be found to advance no judgement for which he did not render a reason. "To think freely and for himself is

⁴ James Legge, *A Letter to Professor F. Max Müller*, London, Trübner & Co., 1880, p. 19.

⁵ James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1 (1861), Preface, ix. Dated March 26, 1861, Hong Kong.

a source to him of much happiness." He also hoped that the time would come very soon "when among the Chinese themselves there will be found many men of intelligence, able and willing to read without prejudice what he may say about the teachings of their sages."⁶

From Legge's own words, one can discern a three-tier concern over the readers of his work. First, the missionaries and the students of Chinese studies. Second, a wider general public outside China. Third, the Chinese intelligentsia themselves. While Legge's principal interest was in helping the missionary cause, he saw the importance of bridging the gap between the West and the East through his own work. The "maintenance of peace" and "a good understanding between two great nations" as mentioned in his *Inaugural Lecture* reflected his outlook on the human family from a broader worldview. This worldwide outlook helped James Legge to have a sympathetic understanding of Chinese cultural heritage. Fairbairn in praising him in his funeral address said that Legge had "the insight which comes of the heart even more than of the head" into Chinese literature and religion, and he saw that "the primary condition of making the West influential in the East was to make the

⁶ Ibid.

East intelligible to the West."⁷ Fairbairn also said that only those who knew Legge could appreciate the idea, the splendid dream of humanity and religion that gave birth to the translation.⁸ A colleague of Legge at Oxford, Fairbairn described Legge after more than thirty years' service in the Far East as returning to England not to forsake the East, but only to serve it.⁹ Legge's vision appears to be a missionary one as well as a humanitarian one with an international spirit.

During the years as a missionary in the East and his career as a scholar at Oxford, Legge always kept China and her fate in his mind, in his sermons, in his writings, and in his lectures. Preaching on the occasion of the sixty-fifth anniversary of the London Missionary Society in 1859, he said, "Fearful visions of what is to come of China often rise up before me" lest the fierce ambitions of Western powers like Russia, France, United States, Britain would leave China "dashed from their

⁷ A.M. Fairbairn, "The Funeral Address", *The Independent and Nonconformist*, Dec. 9, 1897, p. 432. Also quoted in Lindsay Ride's "Biographical Note", p. 24. Cf. H.E. Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, p. 231.

⁸ Ibid. Cf. H.E. Legge, op. cit., p. 232.

⁹ Ibid., but this description was not quoted by Lindsay Ride and H.E. Legge.

embrace, bleeding and torn."¹⁰ Later as the Professor of Chinese at Oxford, in the discussion of the Nestorian Monument and his reflection on past Christian missionary labours in China, he wrote:

Christianity has been working for nearly nineteen centuries in Europe, and yet the best of its populations is far from being a kingdom of our God and His Christ. How long it will be before China, with its millenniums of history in the past and hundred-millioned population, will become such a kingdom we cannot tell; but while there is no harder life than that of a Chinese missionary, there is none more satisfying, none that should so stir the ambition of the most cultured and noblest-aimed of the educated youth of Christendom.¹¹

In other words, scholarship should be the essential preparation to the missionary work in China so as to help her to become a kingdom of God. But then the experience of the Chinese people in the nineteenth century worried Legge. He expressed his hope on the future of China in one of his lectures as follow:

During the present century, I am afraid that China and its people, in consequence of their unsuccessive wars with ourselves, with France, and more recently with the Japanese, have fallen in general estimation. I hope that the lowest point of declension has been

¹⁰ James Legge, *The Land of Sinim* (1859), p. 32. Legge also revealed that thinking of a China "bleeding and torn" has been too painful for him, *ibid*.

¹¹ James Legge, *The Nestorian Monument* (1888), p. 65.

reached, and that soon a movement in the contrary direction will commence, and by and by the Empire will take the place it ought to hold among the other great nations of the world.¹²

While worrying about the situation of China, Legge showed a kind of confidence in the future destiny of China. What kind of "movement" was actually in Legge's thoughts, a movement that would begin to place China among the other great nations of the world has to be explored. As an European missionary, what would be the basic foundation for Legge's hope and vision of China? Besides Christianity, what else could Legge rely upon? Are there other factors that might relate to his labours in scholarship, translation and evangelization?

The Translation Principle

Legge devoted most of his lifetime in translating the Chinese Classics and other ancient Chinese literature. The process of translation can be re-examined from different perspectives. In the past, Legge's efforts have been assessed principally from the viewpoint of

¹² James Legge, "The Emperor Yao", Ms. Eng. misc. d. 1260, fol. 41. Oxford Bodleian Library collection. A Typescript most probably used for the lecture on "China before the time of the Emperor Yao" on March 11, 1897, cf. Appendix I. Cf. also Ms. Eng. misc. e. 1377, fols. 13-26, the original handwritten manuscript in Bodleian.

sinological scholarship rather than from a missiological viewpoint. Modern scholars in mission studies begin to look at the process of translation not only as literary scholarship but in a way essential to the missionary cause. Anthony J. Gittins puts it this way:

... unless we who come as missionaries to another culture learn to recognize and respect other people's values (relevance), we will fail both to demonstrate the coherence and attractiveness of our own (since we will fail to bridge our respective worlds), and to present a living word for TRANSLATION and assimilation. We may colonize people; we may get them to pass our examinations; we may present them with an alien - and irrelevant - moral system; but we will not bring into their world and families and lives such an extension of the reign of God as will be HUMANIZING and LIBERATING, and above all relevant.¹³

Gittins also points out that if the gospel is to be translated, in his terms "carried over", into another culture, then indeed it must be translated, "transformed", "converted", from one linguistic system to another. Without such a fundamental upheaval, the meaning of the gospel will remain trapped between the covers of a lifeless text. Without real translation and authentic tradition, bible is no better than babel.¹⁴ Gittins

¹³ Anthony J. Gittins, *Gifts and Strangers: Meeting the Challenge of Inculturation*, New York, Paulist Press, 1989, p. 59. Emphasis by the present writer.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 67.

mentions 'real translation' and 'authentic tradition' while he asks missionaries to recognize and respect other people's values, so as to bring a humanizing and liberating gospel message. The willingness to appreciate and to learn from other people's culture cannot be detached from the process of translation. Under such circumstance, the translator himself or herself will be "transformed" or "converted". Gittins adds that only if we meet people on their turf, epistemological as well as geographical, can we communicate in an authentic way.¹⁵ One cannot be involved explicitly in mission, unless one engages with a culture that is clearly different from one's familiar point of reference.¹⁶ Perhaps if we simply acknowledge that we are all, necessarily, to a degree ethnocentric and racist, we will then be open to re-education and conversion.¹⁷ But if the missionary is ignorant enough to assume, or, worse, to proclaim that the people he or she meets have no beliefs, no religion or no morality, it is a sad reflection not on the people but on the judge.¹⁸ Gittins states that language, behaviour and belief are all intimately related and a

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 12.

cultural heritage is transmitted through language.¹⁹ He thus develops the idea that language acquisition must go hand in hand with the integrated acquisition of culture.²⁰ From Gittins' analysis, the missionary who involves the task of translation will not only deal with the problem of language in a literal sense but he or she has to venture and even integrate himself or herself into a new milieu of the people's culture that should not be ignored or despised.

... translation is the art of the impossible. Exact transmission of meaning from one linguistic medium to another is continually hampered not only by structural and cultural difference; the words of the receptor language are pre-loaded, and the old cargo drags the new into areas uncharted in the source language. In the end the translator has simply to do his best and take risks in a high risk business.²¹

In this chapter, we are going to argue that James Legge should be seen as a translator who took the risks and tried his very best, and as an outcome of it was dragged into uncharted areas in the Chinese cultural milieu.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 15.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 42.

²¹ Andrew F. Walls, "The Translation Principle in Christian History", in Philip C. Stine (ed.) *Bible Translation and the Spread of the Church*, p. 24.

In Professor Walls' words, incarnation is translation.²² That God chose translation as his mode of action for the salvation of humanity. Christian faith rests on a divine act of translation. When God in Christ became man, Divinity was translated into humanity, as though humanity were a receptor language. The translation of God into humanity was effected under very culture-specific conditions. The implications of this, in the light of the Johannine symbol of the Word made flesh along with the Pauline symbol of the Second Adam, the Ephesian theme of the multi-ethnic New Humanity which reaches its full stature in Christ, and with Paul's concern for Christ to be formed in the newly founded Gentile churches, means that Christ, God's translated speech, is re-translated from the Palestinian Jewish original. As the words of the great Commission require that the various nations are to be made disciples of Christ, not just some people within the nations,²³ national distinctives are within the scope of discipleship. Christ can become visible within the very things which constitute nationality, and this first divine act of translation into humanity gives rise to a constant succession of new translations. Furthermore,

²² Ibid., pp. 24-27.

²³ Ibid., p. 25, note 3.

professor Walls makes another important point that there is a real parallel between the translation process and the conversion process:

Translation involves the attempt to express the meaning of the source from the resources of, and within the working system of the receptor language. Something new is brought into the language, but that new element can only be comprehended by means of and in terms of the pre-existing language and its conventions. In the process that language and its system is effectively expanded, put to new use; but the translated element from the source language has also, in a sense, been expanded by translation ...²⁴

Conversion, like translation, implies the use of existing structures, the "turning" of those structures to new directions, the application of new material and standards to a system of thought and conduct already in place and functioning. Therefore, conversion is not merely about substitution, the replacement of something old by something new, but about transformation, i.e., the turning of the already existing to new account. In other words, conversion is the turning, or the re-orientation, of every culture-specific humanity to God. It is not a single aoristic act but a process which we cannot presume to posit an end.²⁵ Conversion as a process is now being

²⁴ Ibid., p. 25.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 25-26.

widely accepted by modern theologians and missiologists.²⁶ perhaps the same understanding can be applied to the translation process as Professor Walls further elaborates his view:

... indeed, it [translation] is a working model of conversion, a turning of the processes of language (with the thought of which that language is the vehicle and the traditions of which is the deposit) towards Christ. And like conversion, it has a beginning but no end. However effective the impact, it is never good enough; and as social life and language change, so must translation. The principle of translation is the principle of revision.²⁷

"The principle of translation is the principle of revision." James Legge's achievement in the field of scholarship, translation and evangelization can be re-examined by applying this principle critically. This thesis is going to search for signs of "conversion", "transformation", "revision" and the efforts of

²⁶ "Conversion is not a weekly experience. It is a lifelong process often marked by distinct experiences in different stages of life ..." Cf. Vincent Donovan, *The Church in the Midst of Creation*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1989, p. 103.

Gustavo Gutiérrez describes conversion as a radical transformation of ourselves and it presupposes that one decides to set out on a new path, not something that is done once and for all, but it entails a development. Cf. *We Drink from Our Own Wells*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1984, pp. 95ff, also p. 160, note 1.

²⁷ Andrew F. Walls, *ibid.*, p. 27.

translating the gospel message in a "relevant", "humanizing" and "liberating" way among the works of this nineteenth century Scottish Protestant missionary-sinologue both in Hong Kong (and China) and in Britain.

The Application of the Translation Principle by James Legge

At the early age of twenty-five, Legge received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the New York University. He had just succeeded John Evans as Principal of the Anglo-Chinese College in Malacca after Evans died on November 28, 1840 because of an sudden attack of cholera.²⁸ The major academic achievement of Legge at that time which probably led to the award mentioned above, as suggested by Lauren Pfister, would be the publication of *A Lexilogus of the English, Malay, and Chinese Languages; comprehending the vernacular idioms of the last in the Hok-keen and Canton dialects* in Malacca in 1841.²⁹ After

²⁸ On John Evan's death, cf. Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, Shanghai, American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1867 (Reprinted by Taiwan, Chéng-wen Publishing Company, 1967), p. 76.

²⁹ Lauren Pfister, "Some New Dimensions in the Study of the Works of James Legge (1815-1897): Part I", *Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal* (1991, XII), p. 32, note 11.

that, Legge had published a lot of Chinese materials through the printing press of the Anglo-Chinese College.³⁰ Among these Chinese publications, *Hěä ürh kwún chin*³¹ (*The Chinese Serial*) was a monthly magazine published by the printing press of the Anglo-Chinese College from 1853 to 1856. The editors of the magazine included W.H. Medhurst, C.B. Hillier and James Legge.³² The magazine was probably the first regular Chinese magazine printed in Hong Kong

The work mentioned is under the list of English publications by James Legge, in Alexander Wylie, op. cit., p. 121. Wylie made the note that it is published anonymously. The accomplishment reflects the hard labour of eight hours a day in the study of the Chinese language and another hour on studying Malay. Cf. letter to the Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society by James Legge, dated February 18, 1840, LMS Archives, Ultra-Ganges, China-Malacca, Incoming Letters, Box 3, Folder 4, Jacket C.

³⁰ Cf. Wylie, *ibid.*, pp. 119-120. Wylie has listed eighteen published works by James Legge in Chinese. Most of them can be found in the section of Oriental Books of the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

³¹ *The Chinese Serial*, in Pinyin system would be *Xiaer Guanzhen*.

³² Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 120. The magazine was first published in August, 1853 and the last issue May, 1856, with a total of thirty-three issues. The contents of the magazine were all written in Chinese but an "index of contents" in English was placed after the Chinese table of contents. A photocopied edition of the magazine is now being kept in the school library of Ying Wah Boy's School in Hong Kong, the continuation of the Anglo-Chinese College that was once under the charge of James Legge. An original copy can be found in the Hong Kong University library.

and the contents included news from the western world and different kinds of modern knowledge. Columns on science, geography, history, medicine, astronomy, commerce, religion and politics could be found in *The Chinese Serial*. However, little is known about the identity of the native assistants for the publication of the magazine.

Another publication, *Yǎng sin shīn she* (*Hymn Book*) was also ascribed to James Legge's efforts.³³ This was probably one of the earliest Chinese hymn books and it was first published in Malacca in 1842. A revised and enlarged edition was published in Hong Kong in 1852. A later revision was published at Hong Kong in 1862 under the title *Tsung choò she chang*.³⁴ These publications of Chinese hymns had a particular feature in common; they all adopted the use of "Shangti" for the word "God", and "Shin" for "Spirit".³⁵ In hymn thirty-eight which expressed the gospel as the decree of "Shangti", the last

³³ Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 119. *Hymn Book*, in Pinyin, *Yangxin Shenshi*, literally means "spiritual songs for nurturing the heart".

³⁴ *Ibid.* In Pinyin, *Zongzhu Shizhang*, literally means "hymns for adoring the Lord". A later edition of this work, published in 1868, can be found in the section of Oriental Books of the Bodleian Library at Oxford, Sinica 1498. A very similar work entitled *Yangxin Shenshi*, Sinica 1648, published in 1871 can be found in the same place.

³⁵ Cf. Sinica 1498 and Sinica 1648, *passim*.

verse said that "the classics are not purely human opinion and the gospel is actually the kindly voice of "Ti"; the Heavenly Law should be proclaimed and its righteousness would surpass all the sages, and the "Tao" (i.e. the Way) excels all books in opening people's minds."³⁶

Besides Chinese hymns, before the publication of the first volume of the *Chinese Classics* in 1861, hints of Legge's Chinese theology can be traced in several items of religious literature published by him and his native assistant Ho Tsun-sheen. The most significant one among them is probably *Shing King ching keú* (*Scriptural Evidences*).³⁷ The chief author of *Scriptural Evidences* was Ho Tsun-sheen. In this pamphlet he stated that the Old Testament was written between the period of the Shang Dynasty and the Eastern Chou (Spring and Autumn Period) Dynasty in China.³⁸ Though the ancient classics of the sages mention "Shangti", when compared with the Holy

³⁶ Sinica 1498, pp. 28-29. English translation by the writer.

³⁷ *Scriptural Evidences*, in Pinyin, *Shengjing Zhengju*, Sinica 1156 in Bodleian. This pamphlet was originally a preface to a commentary compiled by Ho Tsun-sheen, called *Sin yo tseûen shoo choó shih* (*Commentary on Matthew*, in Pinyin, *Xinyue Quanshu Zhushi*), published in Hong Kong in 1854, cf. Wylie, op. cit., pp. 119-120. Sinica 1156 has the original date at 1853.

³⁸ Sinica 1156, p. 1.

Scriptures, they are just ordinary lights compared to the sun.³⁹ In this work, Ho accepted the earliest author of the Old Testament as Moses and the latest Malachi. The New Testament was completed in the time of Eastern Han Dynasty in China.⁴⁰ In discussing the doctrine of trinity, Ho used "Ti-fu" (God the Father), "Ti-zi" (God the Son), and "Ti-shin" (God the Spirit) and "Shangti" (God).⁴¹ Ho also mentioned that he met Legge while he was young, and at the time of the original publication he had already studied the Holy Scriptures under the guidance of Legge for fourteen years.⁴² The reciprocal relationship between Legge and Ho in scholarship, translation and evangelization will be dealt with in another chapter.

In the undated *Shing shoo yaou shwō seih é* (*Skeleton Sermons*, or *Shengshu Yaoshuo Xiyi*)⁴³ Legge expounded on several passages in the Bible in Chinese.⁴⁴ On Malachi

³⁹ Ibid., p. 6.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 1.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 6-7. These terms will be discussed further in the coming chapter on the "Term Question".

⁴² Ibid., p. 16.

⁴³ Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 120; *Sinica* 1414 in Bodleian Library, also undated. As Wylie's book was first published in 1867, this work must be a publication prior that date.

⁴⁴ Wylie, *ibid.*, described the work "contains twenty seven scripture texts, with outlines of a discourse on each", but in *Sinica* 1414 the writer has found

1:6, Legge pointed out that the Chinese transliteration "Ye-he-hua" (Jehovah) would represent the Judaic pronunciation of the venerable name of God, "Shang-ti".⁴⁵ On I Chronicles 29:5, Legge used the example of David who could serve God ("Shang-ti") with his fellow Israelites to make the point that if the Emperor of China would do the same with his subjects, then China would be peaceful and prosperous in the coming future.⁴⁶ Both Legge and Ho associated "Shang-ti" in the Chinese ancient texts with the true "God" in the Holy Scriptures in their Chinese publications. Another example is *Lō loô pūh shaou* (*Unscathed in the Furnace*, or *Luolu Bushao*)⁴⁷. This is a religious tract and a Cantonese version of Daniel and his friends, with an exposition at the end of the story. In

out that there are altogether twenty nine passages being expounded.

⁴⁵ Sinica 1414, p. 4.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 20-21. Legge used the term 'Tai-Ping' (literally the "Great Peace") to describe his vision of China. This term was actually used by the Taiping movement. Legge also used extracts from the *Analects* support his viewpoint. The text Legge used was from the *Analects* Book III, Chapter XII. 2: The Master said, "I consider my not being present at the sacrifice, as if I did not sacrifice". Cf. *Chinese Classics, Vol. I* (1861), *Analects*, p. 23.

⁴⁷ Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 121. An interesting feature for the modern Chinese readers about this tract is that it is written in Cantonese, i.e. the dialect of the Guangdong (or Kwangtung) province and the majority of the population in Hong Kong up to the present. The one that can be found in Bodleian, Sinica 1193, is also dated.

"Li" ("reason") and the will of God, "Shang-ti".⁴⁸ Legge here uses the words of Mencius to illustrate that "righteousness" is more precious than life, as in the *Works of Mencius*, Book VI, Part I, Chapter X.1: "So, I like life, and I also like righteousness. If I cannot keep the two together, I will let life go and choose righteousness."⁴⁹ In *Yây soo shan shâng ch'uy heún* (*Sermon on the Mount, with Commentary, or Yesu Shanshang Chuixun*)⁵⁰, earlier work of Chinese commentary by Legge, the use of Confucian and Mencian teachings in expounding Christian Scriptures can be found in several places. On Matthew 6:32, Legge used passages from the *Analects* and the *Works of Mencius* to elucidate the meaning of the biblical text.⁵¹ "The men of antiquity cultivated their nobility of Heaven, and the nobility of man came to them in its train."⁵² "When one gives few occasions for blame

⁴⁸ Sinica 1193, pp. 9-11.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 12. The English translation is from *Chinese Classics*, Vol. II (1861), p. 287.

⁵⁰ Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 119. According to Wylie, this work was first published in Hong Kong in 1844 and a revision was published at Hong Kong in 1865. Two editions of this work can be found in Bodleian, but with quite different dates of publication. One is Sinica 1529 (1853), and the other Sinica 1616 (1870).

⁵¹ Sinica 1529, p. 36.

⁵² Cf. *Chinese Classics*, Vol. II (1861), p. 295; Legge's translation of the *Works of Mencius*, Book VI, Chapter XVI. 2.

in its train."⁵² "When one gives few occasions for blame in his words, and few occasions for repentance in his conduct, he is in the way to get emolument."⁵³ On Matthew 7:3, Legge used the following Confucian text. "Never has there been a man, who, not having reference to his own character and wishes in dealing with others, was able effectually to instruct them."⁵⁴ Legge has used "existing structures" to express the meaning of the gospel message. The process of "conversion" and "transformation" has taken place throughout his religious tracts in reaching the Chinese mind. Two more examples from the Chinese publications by Legge may serve to demonstrate this point.

Chúng séw lè paé táng jîn tsè e kwán ke táou sháng té chüh wán (*Prayer used at the Reopening of the Chapel and Hospital at Hong Kong, or Zhongxiu Libaitong Jenji Yiguan Qidao Shangdi Zhuwen*)⁵⁵ presents a very clear

⁵² Cf. *Chinese Classics*, Vol. II (1861), p. 295; Legge's translation of the *Works of Mencius*, Book VI, Chapter XVI. 2.

⁵³ Cf. *Chinese Classics*, Vol. I (1861), p. 15; Legge's translation of the *Analects*, Book II, Chapter XVIII. 2.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Chinese Classics*, Vol. I (1861), p. 235, Legge's translation of the *Great Learning*, Chapter IX. 4.

⁵⁵ Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 119. According to Wylie, this prayer was published in Hong Kong in 1852. It also includes the exposition of an appropriate text, and an exhortation used on the occasion. A copy of this tract can be found in Bodleian Library, Sinica 1350.

understanding of Chinese culture as the basis of Christian faith. In the "Exposition" of the tract, Legge presented a similar view to that found in *Skeleton Sermons*,⁵⁶ saying that "Ye-he-hua" was the Hebraic name for "Shang-ti" in Chinese tradition.⁵⁷ Legge argued that originally "Shin" was mainly human speculation and actually it did not exist. In later generations the emergence of "Shin"s was based on popular heroic figures in Chinese history like Guandi and Hua Tuo of the period of the Three Kingdoms (A.D. 220-280). The "Shin"s (i.e. the spirits), of these figures, were made by "Shang-ti", and their statutes just by human hands.⁵⁸ "Shang-ti", is purely "Shin", that means "God is purely spirit."⁵⁹ In the "Exhortation" of this tract, James Legge tried to defend Christianity by saying that many people had misunderstood the faith as something belonging to the western nations, and treated converts as following strange doctrines. In such case, a Christian would be condemned by his fellow

From that tract we can understand that the "appropriate text" is Isaiah 66: 1-2, cf. Sinica 1350. "Jingtí Jielun" ("Exposition on the Scriptural Text"), four pages. Another page of "Quanci" ("Exhortation") is attached to the prayer and the exposition.

⁵⁶ Sinica 1350, "Jingtí Jielun", p. 1.

⁵⁷ Cf. Sinica 1414, p. 4, note 45 of this chapter.

⁵⁸ Sinica 1350, *ibid.* Guandi's real name was Guan Yunchang.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

countrymen as defying his own motherland and violating the way of the sages. But Legge then contended that the way of Jesus is the way of "Shang-ti". The Holy Scriptures of "Shang-ti" were inspired by the "Sheng Shin" ("Holy Spirit"), with the Old Testament starting during the Shang Dynasty and the New Testament ending during the Han Dynasty. The Holy Scriptures were not privately instructed to the western people as their own laws, but should be seen as catholic decrees for all nations. If people of this nation would scrutinize the Holy Scriptures carefully, they would understand that Christian faith really surpasses ordinary teachings.⁶⁰ In the text of the prayer, it is mentioned that China was originally a very civilized country but unfortunately the whole nation has forgotten to worship "Shang-ti" and even the Emperors of the Heavenly Dynasty failed to think of building "Li-Bai-Tang" (lè pái táng, or literally "Hall for worship"). The Emperors built ancestral temples only and served the "Gui"s and "Shins" of the mountains and rivers but not "Shang-ti".⁶¹ The prayer also said that all "Shin"s and all human beings are made by "Shang-ti", all are the servants and ministers of "Shang-ti" and should

⁶⁰ Ibid., "Quanci", p. 1.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 2. "Gui", literally means the spirit or spirits of the departed. "Gui" and "Shin" together could also mean "spiritual beings", cf. *Chinese Classics*, Vol. I (1861), p. 375.

listen to the will of "Shang-ti". "Shin"s should not worship human beings and human beings should not worship "Shin"s but both "Shin"s, and human beings should only worship "Shang-ti".⁶²

Wàng kin shan yaou këue (*Advice to Emigrants, or Wang Jinshan Yaojue*)⁶³ is another interesting piece of religious literature printed by the mission press at the Anglo-Chinese College in the middle of the nineteenth century. As advice to the would be Chinese gold-diggers, it reminds them that there is a treasure that surpasses gold ten thousand times, i.e. the way of salvation of "Shang-ti".⁶⁴ It describes the general situation of San Francisco and Sydney and also the danger of the journeys to these places.⁶⁵ The success of these emigrants depends on the blessings of the Lord of Heaven. The Lord of Heaven is "Shang-ti".⁶⁶ In one of the prayers prepared for

⁶² Ibid., p. 2.

⁶³ Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 120. According to Wylie, this work was published in Hong Kong in 1858. It commences with an address to Chinese, who are going to the gold diggings; which is followed by an article on the duty of worshipping God, and next on the method of worshipping God; after which are a series of prayers, the ten commandments, an article on faith, a hymn and two doxologies. The one that can be found in Bodleian Library was published in 1872, Sinica 1494.

⁶⁴ Cf. Sinica, 1494, p. 1.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 2-4.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 5.

these would-be emigrants, the text points out that there are millions of "Shin"s but there is only one "Shang-ti", and all the spirits ("ling") of the "Shin"s are created by "Shang-ti".⁶⁷ In another prayer it records that "Shang-ti" is purely "Shin" ("spirit"), and therefore has no need for food and drink.⁶⁸ This religious literature reflects the concern of the Chinese Church at that time and the substances are mainly based on "existing structures" that could easily be understood by the Chinese population in those days.

*Yō sih ké lěō (Brief History of Joseph, or Yuese Jilue)*⁶⁹ was written in traditional Chinese novel style. It is a remarkable presentation of biblical stories in terms of literary genre. The adoption of such a literary form was intended to please the readers in order that they would enjoy reading it.⁷⁰ All this Chinese religious

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 14; cf. Sinica 1350, p. 3, note 59 of this chapter.

⁶⁹ Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 119. According to Wylie, this is divided into six chapters, each preceded by a verse of poetry, and followed by strictures on the narratives. It was first printed in Hong Kong in 1852 and was later reprinted in 1862 with pictorial embellishments. The one that can be found in Bohleian Library, Sinica 1213, was reprinted in 1871, also with pictures and a preface of four pages.

⁷⁰ Cf. Sinica 1213, preface, p. 3.

literature written or compiled by James Legge demonstrates the process of "translation" by turning the "existing structures" to new directions. Traditional Chinese wisdom, the sayings of the sages, the heroic figures in Chinese history, and the Chinese literary heritage; all these have been used to help the Chinese to understand the gospel message. The writer has the impression that Legge had so thoroughly imbibed the Chinese cultural tradition that he just poured out elements from this tradition very naturally.⁷¹ The use of Confucian or Mencian teachings was part of Legge's own thinking. It was not his only purpose to prove himself as a sinological scholar in presenting the Christian faith in Chinese terms. He has in fact been "converted" into a mode of thinking in Chinese terms. However, scholarship and missionary work are closely related in Legge's vision of evangelizing China. Way back in 1839, Legge replied to the question in his pre-ordination examination on how to exercise his ministry among the heathen in the following way:

... there will be necessary in the first place a perfect acquaintance with their

⁷¹ All the references from the *Chinese Classics* mentioned in the notes above are documented by the present writer. Legge seemed to assume that the readers knew where all the quotations actually cited from.

language or languages ... so as that while I speak from the heart I may speak likewise to the heart ... an examination of their history, their philosophy, their religion, and their poetry, and at the same time a familiarity with their customs and manners which must be the result of many years' unceasing toil.⁷²

After his missionary career in the Far East, he spoke on the role and qualifications of a missionary in a special meeting:

The most successful men were those who possessed the most likely qualifications, whose command of the speech of the people was the most fluent and correct, and whose research into its literature had been the deepest and most extensive.⁷³

Furthermore, Legge emphasized that it is of the utmost importance that the missionaries should use every means in their power to become acquainted with heathen religion.⁷⁴ In another speech to a group of Baptist missionaries, Legge talked about his professorship at Oxford in relation to the missionary cause like this:

The Chinese Chair at Oxford was intended by some of its promoters to be mainly a Chair of Research. I hailed my appointment to it very much in the hope that it would also give me the

⁷² Legge, "Pre-Ordination Examination" (May 25, 1839, Trevor Chapel, Brompton), pp. 16-17, LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, Box 9.

⁷³ Legge, "Missionary", undated, p. 7; LMS Archives, China Personal Papers, Box 8.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

opportunity to lay in the minds of young men intended for Missionary Work the foundation of a Chinese Scholarship that would be useful to them in their future course ...⁷⁵

These statements reflected a development of Legge's thinking after over thirty years in the mission field.

... for the more I understand the Chinese language, the more am I convinced that ... several years of intense and continuous study and much intercourse with the people will be necessary before he can be pronounced to be a Chinese scholar. I have heard some individuals observe, indeed, that they do not want missionaries to be scholars, but nothing appears to me more evident than before a European can be a Chinese Missionary ... he must be a scholar thoroughly equipt - a scribe well instructed, able to wield the language, massive and rugged as it is, as fluently and reading as the accents of his mother tongue ...

To be among the Chinese as a Chinaman ... Every other engagement shall be placed in a secondary position ... until I have learned both to speak and write as a Chinaman.⁷⁶

Years later, one can hardly doubt that Legge could both speak and write as though Chinese and could even think as though Chinese. He became a missionary, one might say European in birth but with a Chinese mind. The translation process had been going on not only in his

⁷⁵ Legge, "Baptist Missionary Breakfast" (undated), p. 6; LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, Box 8.

⁷⁶ Legge, letter to Rev. A. Tidman, August 1, 1840, LMS Archives, Ultra-Ganges, China-Malacca, Incoming Letters, Box 3, Folder 4, Jacket C.

religious works but also in his contributions to the field of sinological studies.

The masterpiece of James Legge's publications is definitely his translation of the *Chinese Classics*. Volume I, containing Confucian *Analects*, the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean* was published in 1861.⁷⁷ Volume II, containing the *Works of Mencius*, was probably published at the beginning of 1862.⁷⁸ Volume III, in two parts, containing the *Shoo-King (the Book of Historical Documents)*⁷⁹, was published in 1865. Volume IV, again in two parts, containing the *She-King (the Book of Poetry)*, was published in 1871.⁸⁰ Volume V, also in two parts, containing the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and the orthodox commentary of the *Tzo Chuan*, was published in 1872.⁸¹ For each volume, the exact title was *The Chinese Classics: with a Translation, Critical and Exegetical Notes, Prolegomena, and Copious Indexes*. Before the title

⁷⁷ The Preface of Volume I was dated March 26, 1861. Cf. Legge, *Chinese Classics*, Vol. I, xi.

⁷⁸ The advertisement of the original edition of Volume II was dated November 21, 1861. Cf. Legge, *Chinese Classics*, Vol. II, "Advertisement", v.

⁷⁹ The Preface of Volume III was dated July 15, 1865. Cf. Legge, *Chinese Classics*, Vol. III, viii.

⁸⁰ The Preface of Volume IV was dated December 14, 1871. Cf. Legge, *Chinese Classics*, Vol. IV, vi.

⁸¹ The Preface of Volume V was dated September, 1872. Cf. Legge, *Chinese Classics*, Vol. V, vi.

page of each volume, Legge quoted the following words from the *Works of Mencius* in Chinese:

... [Therefore, those who explain the odes], may not insist on one term so as to do violence to a sentence, nor on a sentence so as to do violence to the general scope. They must try with their thoughts to meet that scope, and then we shall apprehend it ...⁸²

From 1861 onwards, Legge set out his own translation principle by following the ideas of Mencius. After the publication of the last volume of the *Chinese Classics*, Legge devoted his energy to translating the *Sacred Books of China*, which were then incorporated into the series called *The Sacred Books of the East*, edited by Professor F. Max Müller. Those contributed by Legge were the following:

Sacred Books of the East, Vol. III (the Sacred Books of China, the Texts of Confucianism, PART I, the Shû King, the Religious Portions of the Shih King, the Hsião King), 1879;

Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XVI (the Sacred Books of China, the Texts of Confucianism, PART II, the Yí King), 1882;

⁸² Legge, *Chinese Classics, Vol. II, Work of Mencius, Book V, Part I, Chapter IV. 2, p. 239.*

Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXVII, and Vol. XXVIII (the *Sacred Books of China*, the *Texts of Confucianism*, PART III and IV, the *Lî Kî*), 1885;

Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XXXIX, and Vol. XL (the *Sacred Books of China*, the *Texts of Taoism*, PART I and II, includes *The Tão Teh King*, the *Writings of Kwang-Tze*, and the *Treatise of 'Actions and their Retributions'*), 1891.⁸³

On the issue of translation, one must not overlook the Preface of the *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XVI written by Legge himself.⁸⁴ Discussing the difficulty of translating the *Yi King* (the *Book of Changes*), Legge expressed the following view:

... in a fact which I had unconsciously acted on in all my translations of other classics, namely, that the written characters of the Chinese are not representations of words, but symbols of ideas, and that the combination of them in composition is not a representation of what the writer would say, but of what he thinks. It is vain therefore for a translator to attempt a literal vision. When the symbolic characters have brought his mind en rapport with that of his author, he is free to render the ideas in his own or any other speech in the best manner that he can attain to. This is the rule which Mencius followed in

⁸³ They were all published by the Clarendon Press at Oxford.

⁸⁴ Legge, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XVI, Preface, xiii-xxi.

interpreting the old poems of his country:- 'We must try with our thoughts to meet the scope of a sentence, and then we shall apprehend it.'⁸⁵ In the study of a Chinese classical book there is not so much an interpretation of the characters employed by the writer as a participation of his thoughts; - there is the seeing of mind to mind.⁸⁶

The "seeing of mind to mind" showed that Legge was not merely engaged in a kind of literal or mechanical translation. As a translator Legge tried to reach the Chinese mind as well as to open the Chinese mind to the West. He showed great sympathetic understanding in recognizing and respecting the Chinese people's value-systems in the way suggested by Gittins' view of translation.⁸⁷

Legge's contribution to the concept and practice of translation has recently been rediscovered by modern scholars. Clae Waltham, in an introductory article in a modernized edition of the translations of the *Shu Ching* (*Shoo King*) of Legge, reveals the significance of Legge's efforts in reaching the Chinese through the translation process.⁸⁸ Waltham's article is an important guide to a

⁸⁵ Cf. note 82 of this chapter.

⁸⁶ Legge, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XVI, xv.

⁸⁷ Cf. note 13 of this chapter, Gittins' *Gifts and Strangers*, p. 59.

⁸⁸ Clae Waltham, "James Legge and the *Shu Ching*, *Book of History*" in *Shu Ching: Book of History* (ed. by

wider horizon of Legge's achievement in the field of sinology, and are not from an explicitly missiological point of view. First, Waltham quotes Raymond Dawson who ranks Legge with Matteo Ricci and Marco Polo (c. 1254-1324) as pioneers and principal purveyors of the legacy of China to the West to their own generation.⁸⁹ Then Waltham points out that Legge did his work "in the vitiating atmosphere of white supremacy, Victorian hypocrisy, and nineteenth century bigotry."⁹⁰ Even more interesting is what Waltham suggests that "when Legge began his translations China had yet to be taken seriously as a nation" and Legge deliberately sought the assistance of native Chinese scholars rather than Manchu ones because he did not want the "official" interpretation of the classics.⁹¹ Waltham also notices that the general terseness of the Chinese language necessitates what Legge described in his introduction the

Clare Waltham), London: Allen and Unwin, 1972, ix-xvii.

⁸⁹ Clare Waltham, *ibid.*, ix. Cf. Raymond Dawson, "Western Conceptions of Chinese Civilization", in *The Legacy of China* (ed. by Raymond Dawson), Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964, p. 27.

⁹⁰ Clare Waltham, *ibid.*, xi.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* Unfortunately, Waltham fails to give documentary evidence in supporting his point of view.

Book of Changes as the "leap from mind to mind".⁹² Furthermore, Waltham elaborates on the idea of history in relation to the Chinese mind:

But to the Chinese mind, for which a useful analogue is that of a revolving sphere, history exists in its original concept: inquiry into the past. Within this spherical mode of thinking - which not only revolves around the object of its inquiry but also is revolving upon the axis of its own psyche - history is total. It is far more than chronology and event. It is the cumulative evidence of all that has been. Within this spherical mode of thinking, nothing has existence of itself, isolatedly, but it exists as part of and at the same time in relation to everything else ...⁹³

The doctrine of the Mean, later to become a bulwark of Chinese philosophy, also has its beginnings articulated in the *Shu*. This is to be expected as, in spherical thought, history cannot be merely isolated events of the past but must also possess the ability to come full circle to face us from the future as well as buttress the present with philosophical wisdom.⁹⁴

Waltham carries on his interpretation by saying that the Chinese have never lost their sense of the past. "It is a train that sweeps behind them through the centuries, a rich embroidery of philosophy, religion, geography,

⁹² Ibid. But I am afraid that the phrase quoted by Waltham should be "the seeing of mind to mind" as quoted in note 86 of this chapter.

⁹³ Ibid., xii.

⁹⁴ Ibid., xiii.

narrative, origins, and customs" and also "through ancestorism the Chinese remain close to their primordial images, or archetypes".⁹⁵ Waltham thus points that "Legge seemed to sense all this" and that he also made "a leap of faith" to transform legend into history.⁹⁶ Legge died two years before the discovery of the famous oracle bones of 1899, which were inscribed with the early Chinese characters that amazed the world with historical proof of the Shang Dynasty. Later, the 1,000-year chronology that Sima Qian (c.145-c.85 B.C.), the first great Chinese historian, received from tradition was to be verified with only minor corrections. The historicity of the *Shu Ching* is affirmed. "Although Legge always remained a scrupulous and indefatigable scholar, he recognized that too much learned debate could vitiate a heritage." Waltham describes how Legge developed a trivalence: he translated the text like a Chinese, annotated it like an Oxford don, and in his introductions and prolegomena, argued like a Scot.⁹⁷ Then he adds:

Legge recognized that China was not to be bound by our Western definitions of history. But he never forgot the uses of the scholarly discipline ... He became a psychopomp between East and West, never closing the windows of his

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., xiii-xiv.

⁹⁷ Ibid., xiv.

mind. If we of the West set aside these documents as non-history, we cut ourselves off from relevant source material that not only sheds light on early China, the literature of China, the Chinese as a people and, indirectly, the whole Orient, but we also cut ourselves off from insight into human origins in general.⁹⁸

In shorter terms, Legge's achievement is not limited only to the art of literal translation. He has revised and revived human history, not only the history of the Chinese people, but also the history of the whole humankind.

Another article published recently concerning Legge's efforts in the translation process also reflects the elements of "transformation" in a detailed way.⁹⁹ Lauren Pfister treats Legge's methods and principles of translation as displaying the high quality of "an honest translator as well as a self conscious exegete and interpreter".¹⁰⁰ Being aware that the *Chinese Classics* were authoritative texts with long histories of traditional commentaries and subcommentaries, Legge was generally cautious in his translation of questionable

⁹⁸ Ibid., xv.

⁹⁹ Lauren Pfister, "Serving or Suffocating the Sage? Reviewing the Efforts of Three Nineteenth Century Translators of *The Four Books*, with special emphasis on James Legge (A.D. 1815-1897)", in *The Hong Kong Linguist* 7 (Spring/Autumn 1990), pp. 25-56.

¹⁰⁰ Lauren Pfister, *ibid.*, p. 41.

materials.¹⁰¹ "This manifests Legge's respect for the tradition, a necessary attitude for those who would translate authoritative texts."¹⁰² One of the most interesting developments ascertainable from Legge's work is his willingness to refine his earlier work. Among the changes made by Legge in the later edition, the most significant one is probably his shifting away from his earlier critical and harsh evaluations of Confucius.¹⁰³ In the 1861 edition of the *Chinese Classics*, Vol. 1, Legge has the following comment on Confucius:

But I must now leave the sage. I hope I have not done him injustice; but after long study of his character and opinions, I am unable to regard him as a great man. He was not before his age, though he was above the mass of the officers and scholars of his time. He threw no new light on any of the questions which have a world-wide interest. He gave no impulse to religion. He had no sympathy with progress. His influence has been wonderful, but it will henceforth wane. My opinion is, that the faith

¹⁰¹ Ibid., notes 57 and 58, cf. *ibid.*, p. 54. In Legge's *Chinese Classics*, Vol. I (1893 edition), *Analects*, Book VIII, Chapter XII, commentary: Legge voiced his suspicions of textual corruption, p. 212. Cf. *Ibid.*, *Analects*, Book VIII, Chapter XX, p. 215.

¹⁰² Lauren Pfister, *ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-47, cf. especially note 78, p. 55. A more thorough discussion following this point can be found in another article published by Lauren Pfister, "Some New Dimensions in the Works of James Legge (1815-1897): Part II", in *Sino-Western Cultural Relations Journal* 13 (1991), pp. 33-48.

of the nation will speedily and extensively pass away.¹⁰⁴

But then the concluding remarks on Confucius in the 1893 edition of the *Chinese Classics Vol. I* shows a startling reversal which should be seen as a clear sign of either "conversion", or "transformation", or even "revision" in the light of the translation principle:

But I must now leave the sage. I hope I have not done him injustice; the more I have studied his character and opinions, the more highly I have come to regard him. He was a very great man, and his influence has been on the whole a great benefit to the Chinese, while his teachings suggest important lessons to ourselves who profess to belong to the school of Christ.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Legge, *Chinese Classics, Vol. I* (1861), "Prolegomena", p. 113. Cf. Lauren Pfister, *ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁵ Legge, *Chinese Classics, Vol. I* (1893), "Prolegomena", p. 111. Cf. Lauren Pfister, *ibid.*, p. 47. In note 60 on p. 47 of Pfister's article, an anonymous writer is being mentioned as having recognized this change in Legge. The writer is actually Pastor P. Kranz. Besides his article "Prof. J. Legge's Change of Views Concerning Confucius" in *The Chinese Recorder* 35:2 (February, 1904), pp. 93-4, Kranz has also written a series of articles on Legge's work, "Some of Professor J. Legge's Criticisms on Confucianism", *The Chinese Recorder* 29 (June, 1898), pp. 273-282; (July, 1898), pp. 341-345; (August, 1898), pp. 380-388; (September, 1898), pp. 440-445.

Kranz, in one of these articles, praised Legge as "one of the best and truest friends which China ever had", cf. *ibid.*, p. 444. Kranz, in 1898, has already mentioned Legge's change view on Confucius, cf. *ibid.*, p. 282.

Legge's change of view has been neglected for the past decades not only in the field of sinology but also in the arena of missiology. He became a "converted" missionary because of his commitment in scholarship, translation and evangelization. He started as a missionary to the East and ended eventually as a missionary both to the East and the West. In translating the *Chinese Classics*, he not only opened the Chinese mind to the West to help the missionaries to understand the Chinese people, he also recognized that there are "important lessons" for Christians to learn in the Chinese tradition. On another occasion James Legge admitted that the more familiar he got with the classical books the more he thought of them and the better acquainted he grew with Confucius the more he liked him. He even advised his fellow missionaries from the West to approach the religion of China expounded by Confucians not as an assailant but "as a friend, to support what it backs, recognizing its excellencies and offering to the people".¹⁰⁶

In 1880, Legge published *The Religions of China: Confucianism and Taoism Described and Compared with*

¹⁰⁶ Legge, "The Bearing of our Knowledge of Comparative Religion on Christian Missions" (read at a Christian Conference on November 15, 1886), p. 9; LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, Box 4.

Christianity which was based on the Spring Lecture of the Presbyterian Church of England of the same year.¹⁰⁷ The book consists of four chapters. The first one discusses "Confucianism: its doctrine and worship of God";¹⁰⁸ the second "Confucianism: its worship of the dead, and teaching about man";¹⁰⁹ the third "Taoism: as a religion

¹⁰⁷ The publishing press was Hodder and Stoughton in London. The Spring Lecture was delivered in the Presbyterian College, Guilford Street, London. In a short note before the pages of contents of *The Religion of China*, Legge declared that though he did not belong to the Presbyterian Church, he longed to see a frequent interchange of services among ministers of different churches.

¹⁰⁸ Legge, *The Religion of China*, pp. 1-66. On p. 2 Legge put down the following quotations from the *Chinese Classics* and the Bible:

"In the ceremonies at the altars of Heaven and Earth, they serve God." — Confucius, *Doctrine of the Mean*, Chapter xix.

"They knew God." — Paul, *Romans* i. 21.

¹⁰⁹ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 67-156. On p. 68, Legge has another set of quotations:

"Esteem most highly filial piety and brotherly submission, in order to give their due importance to the social relations." — *The Káng-hsî Sacred Edict*, Precept I.

"Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." — *Fifth Commandment*.

and a philosophy".¹¹⁰ The final chapter is "The Chinese religions, as compared with Christianity".¹¹¹ In the concluding part of the final chapter, Legge has reflected his experience as a missionary and a sinologist in the field:

What I have said about Confucianism and Tâoism shows us the need that there is in the great empire of China for Christianity. During my long residence among the Chinese, I learned to think more highly of them than many of our countrymen do; more highly as to their actually morality, and more highly as to their intellectual capacity. Their best attainments in moral excellence, however, are not to be compared with those made by docile learners in

The Káng-hsî Sacred Edict was issued by the Qing Emperor Káng-hsi (Kangxi) in 1669, offering moral guidelines to the Chinese peasantry.

¹¹⁰ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 157-238. On p. 158, Legge quotes:

"The highest goodness is like water, the nature of which is near Tâo." – The Tâo Teh King, Chapter 8.

"Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." – *Luke xiv. 11.*

¹¹¹ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 239-310. On p. 240, Legge quotes:

"Discountenance strange principles in order to exalt the correct doctrine." – *Káng-hsî Edict, 7th Precept.*

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son." – *Epistle to the Hebrews, i. 1, 2.*

the school of Christ. The true Christian is the highest style of man.¹¹²

What Legge really meant by the "true Christian" need not necessarily be a westerner. It seems that Legge was quite conscious of what the Western nations and their missionaries had done in the past. He has somewhat shaken off a European-centred worldview and tried to judge the West from what he had experienced in the East and his understanding of the gospel message. As a "converted" missionary, he would then dare to say:

We must blame ourselves:- the divisions among Christian churches; the inconsistencies and unrighteousnesses of professors; the selfishness and greed of our commerce; the ambitious and selfish policy of so-called Christian nations.¹¹³

Legge was critical in assessing the Confucian tradition but at the same time he was also critical of his own tradition. He was willing to blame the misdeeds of the West, especially those in relation to the East. In his lecture notes on the life of Confucius, he once wrote in this way:

... While China was isolated from the nations of Europe and America, Confucius and his system were sufficient to secure in it a certain amount of order and morality. But with

¹¹² Legge, *ibid.*, p. 308.

¹¹³ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 310.

the present century we have seen them and it brought into hostile collision. I do not think we have reason to congratulate ourselves in our wars with China; but she was all unprepared for them, all unequal for them. A new order of things has been forced upon her; if she is not crumble into fragments, she must go forward in a new course, in which her attachment of Confucius will only fetter her and make her stumble ... In the meantime all who are seeking the good of China and Missionaries especially, do well to accord a general appreciation to the Sage [Confucius] and press on to the accomplishment of their own ends, without rudely assailing him, or driving their chariots over his grave ...¹¹⁴

... It is a great problem - a vital problem for the Christian missionary in China - to determine what there was about Confucius to secure for him the influence which he has wielded.¹¹⁵

Legge did not blindly accept all the teachings of Confucius, but again he did not accept what the Christian churches and the nations of Europe and America had done as impeccable. One's own history, one's own cultural tradition, one's own past should be reviewed in the light of the gospel message. The West was not intrinsically superior to the East. The true explanation to his mind of the advance of the West would have to be found in the

¹¹⁴ Legge, "On the Life of Confucius", fols. 117-118. This is a typescript of Legge's papers in the Bodleian Library, Ms. Eng. Misc. d. 1261, fols. 84-119; original manuscript, Ms. Eng. Misc. e. 1377, fols. 133-156.

¹¹⁵ Legge, *ibid.*, fol. 105. This lecture would probably be the one on January 31, 1877, cf. Appendix I.

Providence of God. God could have caused the Christian truth to take root in India and China as well as in Europe.¹¹⁶

The West ... very far ahead of the East, in all that gives beauty of character, and strength and glory to nations, not by any intrinsic superiority; but mainly by what it has received from God, in the knowledge of Himself and of Christ and immortality. It would be a melancholy thought that there was not the same boon yet in store for the East. I believe that there is. And we may all of us do something in the conferring of it; if our influence be in a contrary direction, it were better for us that we had been born Chinese.¹¹⁷

Therefore while always advocating Christian faith as the ultimate truth, Legge became more and more conscious about the value-systems of other cultures.

One is often grieved to read the incautious assertions of writers who think that apart from our Christian scriptures there are no lessons for men about their duties, and that heathendom has in consequence never been anything but a slough of immoral filth and outrageous crime. Such writers betray their ignorance of the systems and peoples about which they affirm such things, and their ignorance also of the sacred volume which they

¹¹⁶ Legge, "Mencius, the Philosopher of China", fol. 154. Typescript in Bodleian Library, Ms. Eng. Misc. d. 1261, fols. 120-155. Original manuscript, Ms. Eng. misc. e. 1377, fols. 159-184. This lecture would probably be the one on March 15, 1877, cf. Appendix I.

¹¹⁷ Legge, *ibid.*, fols. 154-155.

wish to exalt ... Their advocacy is damaging rather than beneficial to Christianity.¹¹⁸

In the pamphlet *Christianity and Confucianism Compared* (1884) Legge again reflected his view on the Chinese people, in a similar way to what he had said in *The Religions of China* (1880). "I thought of them better, both morally and socially, when I left them, than when I first went among them, more than thirty years before."¹¹⁹ Further examples of Legge's "conversion" and "transformation" can be found in this pamphlet. As he argued that the fruits of Christianity are incomparably better than those of Confucianism where Christian principles have free course, he also admitted that "there are many things that may well make us lay our hands on our mouths, and cease from judging hardly of the heathen Chinese."¹²⁰ As to how the Chinese could be won to Christ, he has the following concluding words:

... it can only be by our showing that in all our intercourse with them, politically, commercially, and in other ways, we are ruled by the principles of love and righteousness, which blend together in 'the golden rule' of

¹¹⁸ Legge, *Christianity and Confucianism Compared in their Teaching of the Whole Duty of Man*, London: Religious Tract Society, 1884, p. 23.

¹¹⁹ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 34, cf. *The Religions of China*, p. 308, as in note 112 of this chapter.

¹²⁰ Legge, *Christianity and Confucianism Compared* (1884), p. 35.

Christ, 'whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them'.¹²¹

In modern theological terms, it is not merely the verbal or oral proclamation of Christian doctrine that could convince the Chinese but the concrete "orthopraxis" of the Christian faith..¹²² However, as a "converted" missionary, Legge is described as "a voice in the wilderness" in his own days by a modern Chinese theologian C.S. Song.¹²³ The sympathetic understanding, recognition and appreciation of the Chinese cultural heritage by Legge actually brought him into a fiercely heated controversy among the Protestant missionaries in the middle of the nineteenth century. The so-called "Term Question" also reflected Legge's efforts in scholarship, translation and evangelization. The present writer would even argue that it is exactly the "Term Question" and its consequences that eventually led to the obliteration of Legge's fame in the mission history of China. It is

¹²¹ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 36.

¹²² The term "orthopraxis" has been widely used by Latin American liberation theologians as well as other third world theologians in the past two decades. Further discussion on Legge's missionary approach in relation to a "liberation" perspective can be found in later chapters of this thesis.

¹²³ C.S. Song, *The Compassionate God*, London: SCM, 1982, p. 211. The reason behind Song's description is that Legge expressed a markedly different attitude towards Chinese culture from his fellow missionaries.

strange that so little has been heard within the Chinese Christian circle in Hong Kong about this "earliest and the greatest English translator of the Confucian classics".¹²⁴ By contrast with the works of the early Jesuits in China, Legge's translation of the *Four Books* was the first complete translation in any European language and also formed the basis of twentieth century sinological studies. Legge's involvement in the translation of the Delegates' version of the Bible put him on a level that even the brilliant Jesuits might find it difficult to match.¹²⁵ As a representative figure of nineteenth century sinological studies,¹²⁶ Legge's legacy

¹²⁴ Chang C'hi-yun, *Confucianism: A Modern Interpretation*, (Taipei: Chinese Culture University Press, 1980), p. 524.

¹²⁵ Dai, Wei-yang David, *Confucius and Confucianism in the European Enlightenment*, Ph.D. Thesis 1979 of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University Microfilms International, pp. 39-40. Dai pointed out that even the Jesuits did not undertake to translate completely the *Four Books*, or the *Five Classics*, nor the Bible.

¹²⁶ Liu Cunjen, "Cong Limadou dao Liyuese di Hanxue Daolu" ("The Route of Sinology from Matteo Ricci to Joseph Needham"), *Ming Bao Yue Kan* (Ming Bao Monthly), July 1991, pp. 82-92. Cf. especially pp. 85-87, Liu described Legge as the representative of sinological studies of the third period. The first period belongs to the era of Marco Polo, the second being Matteo Ricci, while the fourth Joseph Needham. Liu also contrasted the age of Ricci and the age of Legge in terms of Western attitude towards China and Chinese civilization. A great misfortune for Legge, in Liu's viewpoint, is that he came to the East at the beginning of the Opium War and he died when

in terms of his missiological and theological contributions must be re-examined closely. The key issue surrounding these aspects must then be the "Term Question".

China was under the domination of Western powers and even that of a modernized Japan.

CHAPTER THREE: THE TERM QUESTION: THE CENTRAL ISSUE IN LEGGE'S CAREER OF SCHOLARSHIP, TRANSLATION AND EVANGELI- ZATION

A Continued Controversy

The "Term Question" occupies only seven pages, or a short chapter, in James Legge's biography written by his daughter.¹ Helen Edith Legge described the "Term Question" as "the longest and the most embittered controversy" in which James Legge ever engaged.² As a matter of fact, the whole controversy has lasted not only for years but even "for centuries".³ It was a very long chapter in Legge's life, and it cannot be separated from Legge's career of scholarship, translation and evangelization. Helen Edith Legge's work mentioned only two major sources in dealing with the "Term Question", namely Legge's own manifesto

¹ H.E. Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, chapter VI, pp. 68-74.

² *Ibid.*, p. 68.

³ "The Term Controversy" *The North-China Daily News*, Shanghai, February 17, 1881. A newspaper cutting found in the LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, James Legge, Box 9. The controversy was seen by the anonymous contributor as "a dispute which has agitated the minds of the teachers of Christianity in China for years, we might almost say for centuries" and "a matter of unsettled controversy, and has been for nearly 300 years, from the days of the early Jesuit missionaries ..."

published in 1852 and his letter to Professor Friedrich Max Müller in 1880.⁴ The full title of Legge's work in 1852, *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits: with an Examination of the Defence of an Essay, on the Proper Rendering of the Words Elohim and Theos, into the Chinese Language, by William J. Boone, D.D.*, partly reflects the background and history of the issue. However, Helen Legge may have overlooked the works of Legge published in 1850⁵ and does not mention the long list of articles which appeared in the *Chinese Recorder* surrounding the heated debate that was more than a private affair between the Protestant missionaries.⁶ She

⁴ James Legge, *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits* (the common shortened form of the title), (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Register Office 1852). The letter to Professor F. Max Müller is mentioned in Chapter Two already, cf. Chapter Two, note 4.

⁵ James Legge, *An Argument for Shangti as the proper Rendering of Elohim and Theos into the Chinese Language*, Hong Kong, 1850; and also *Letters on the Rendering of the name God in Chinese*, Hong Kong, 1850.

⁶ *General Index of the Chinese Repository*, "List of the Articles", xlix-1. The "Term Question" was never a private issue between the Protestant missionaries as the Roman Catholic missionaries has brought a similar issue before the Emperor Kangxi and the "Chinese Rites Controversy" was ended only with the Pope's intervention in the early eighteenth century. Numerous books and articles have been written on the "Chinese Rites Controversy", James Legge himself was well aware of the Roman Catholic missionaries' debate and he has expressed his opinions on the outcome in several occasions which will be touched upon in this thesis later. One of the major works by

does not even mention the paper "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877) in her chapter on the "Term Question" though the work is mentioned on a few occasions throughout the whole book.⁷ While Helen Edith Legge quotes pages of the letter that was sent to Professor Müller by Legge,⁸ she does not show the seriousness of the occasion, as the charges made by the so-called 'Inquirer' were severe.⁹ Moreover, it seems to me that Helen Edith Legge even fails to recognize that Legge underwent some sort of change of attitude, a kind of "conversion", in this lengthy controversy concerning the "Term Question". The

James Legge which touches on the history of Christian missions is *The Nestorian Movement* (1888). A briefer account is the sermon *The Land of Sinim* (1859).

⁷ H.E. Legge, op. cit., pp. 9-10, 35-38.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 70-73.

⁹ The attack made by the 'Inquirer' can be found in "A letter to Prof. F. Max Müller on the *Sacred Books of China, Part I, The Shu King, Shih King, and the Hsiao King*", *The Chinese Recorder* (May-June, 1880), pp. 161-187. At the end of this article, the 'Inquirer' stated that Legge has given a gloss that "falsifies history" (cf. p. 184) on the "Term Question" and had to be seen as "philologically, mythologically, logically, and historically wrong" (cf. p. 186).

The same author has also contributed another article, "Is the Shangti of the Chinese Classics the same as Jehovah of the Sacred Scriptures?", in *The Chinese Recorder* (September-October, 1877), pp. 411-426. It is a strong and negative response to the use of Shangti in translating God in the Sacred Scriptures advocated by Legge.

key document relating to this "transformation" or "revision" is the one published in 1850, *An Argument for Shang Te as the Proper Rendering of the Words Elohim ad Theos, in the Chinese Language: with Strictures on the Essay of Bishop Boone in Favour of the Term Shin, etc. etc.* (Hong Kong, printed at the Hong Kong Register Office).¹⁰ In a letter addressed to the Directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the American Bible Society, and to the Protestant missionaries in China,¹¹ Legge tells his process of change of mind:

...For several months in 1838 and 1839, I enjoyed the advantage of the instructions in Chinese of the late excellent Mr. Kidd,¹² and did not think of controverting his judgement on the propriety of rendering God by Shin....¹³

... In 1844, I commenced a course of reading to prepare me to fulfil the duty laid

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- ¹⁰ Perhaps the first modern scholar to have notice this change is Donald Treadgold, cf. his *The West in Russia and China: Religious and Secular Thought in Modern Times*, Vol. 2, China, 1582-1949, "Legge and the Term Controversy", pp. 41-45, see especially p. 42. However, Treadgold's judgement on Legge's career throughout the whole book needs some qualification.
- ¹¹ The letter was dated April 27, 1850 and attached to the published work *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850).
- ¹² Samuel Kidd (1799-1843), already mentioned in Chapter One, was Professor of the Chinese Language and Literature in University College, London, from 1837 to 1842.
- ¹³ Legge, letter in *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850), iii.

on me ... interrupted by severe sickness ... in the end of 1845, I was obliged to return to England. Before I left Hongkong, however, I communicated to Dr. Medhurst¹⁴ my views on the subject under our investigation. My opinion at that time was that Shin was the term by which to translate Elohim and Theos. ...¹⁵

... The progress of my thoughts on the subject, therefore, has been the reverse of what took place in the case of Dr. Boone¹⁶ and others. Setting out with Shang-Te, they have arrived at Shin: setting out with Shin, I have arrived at Shang-Te. But I beg it to be understood, that in 1845, I did not contend that Shin had the meaning of God, but only held, according to my light at that time, that with Shin we could come nearer to the idea conveyed by the word God than with any other "Term Question" term.

When I returned in China in 1848, I speedily resumed the consideration of the subject, and was led after a few months to give up all thoughts of Shin. This was the result of my seeing that God was not a generic, but a relative term. It was, however, only been by slow degrees, that I have arrived at my present

¹⁴ Walter Henry Medhurst (1796-1857), along with James Legge, was responsible for the rendering of the names of the Deity into Chinese after a meeting of Protestant missionaries in Hong Kong in August, 1843. Cf. *The Chinese Repository*, Vol. XII (October, 1843, No. 10), Article VII, p. 552.

¹⁵ Legge, *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Bishop William J. Boone (1812-1864), an ardent supporter for "Shin", published his arguments in *The Chinese Repository* on the "Term Question". Legge's *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850) was a response to one of his major articles, "An Essay on the proper rendering of the words Elohim and Theos into the Chinese language", in *The Chinese Repository*, Vol. XVII, (January, 1848, No. 1), pp. 17-53; (February, 1848, No. 2), pp. 57-89.

conviction that Shang-Te, and Shang-te alone, is the word which the Chinese language affords us to translate the original words for God, in every instance of their occurrence.¹⁷

Legge's *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850) and *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits* (1852) can be seen as part of the climax of the first period of the "Term Question", dating from around 1847 to 1855. Both Medhurst and Boone belonged to that generation missionaries but Legge lived long enough to be involved in the second period of the renewed "Term Question" debate in the late 1870s.¹⁸

¹⁷ Legge, letter in *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850), iv.

¹⁸ Samuel Wells Williams (1812-1884), one of the prominent American missionary-sinologues and the author of the two-volume work on China, *The Middle Kingdom* (first edition in 1847, with later editions), wrote an article "The Controversy among the Protestant missionaries on the proper translation of the Words God and Spirit into Chinese", in *Bibliotheca Sacra* (October, 1878), pp. 732-778. Williams has tried to list the leading pamphlets and articles on the subject. The earliest one, dated 1847, was written by Walter H. Medhurst, and the latest ones were written in 1877. Williams did not record Legge's paper in 1877 in the lists but mentioned it in pp. 756-7. Between 1855 and 1876 there were no significant pamphlets or articles listed by Williams. It seemed that the first period of the debate ended coincidentally with the publication of the Delegates Version by different camps of missionaries in different versions, that the British missionaries translated God by using "Shing Ti" and the Americans "Shin". The New Testament was published in 1852 and the Old Testament 1854.

In the letter attached to *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850) quoted above, Legge has stated that he began his serious study on the proper translation of the term "God" into Chinese in 1844. He had been following the line of Samuel Kidd, Robert Morrison and William Milne in accepting "Shin" as the right term in Chinese for "God". But the "progress" of his thoughts, as he ventured into the Chinese classical texts, "by slow degrees" led him to change his standpoint. A gradual, not sudden, process eventually gave Legge at the conviction that "Shang Ti" and "Shang Ti" alone is the word which the Chinese language would afford the missionaries to translate the original words for God. The publication of *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850) and *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits* (1852) became the hallmark of Legge's "conversion" in the translation process for the term "God" in Chinese.¹⁹ One interesting but also significant point here is that while Legge devoted his energy and time to studying the Chinese classical texts

¹⁹ The only other significant document is *Letters on the Rendering of the name God in Chinese*, published Legge in Hong Kong in 1850. Samuel Wells Williams, in the article mentioned above, cf. pp. 754-755, described *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits* (1852) by Legge as a development and illustration of a thesis of the former work. Unfortunately, the present writer has failed to procure the published letters of 1850 to confirm William's account.

to search for the proper term in Chinese to translate "God", he was at the same time preparing for the English translation of the *Chinese Classics*. The eventual outcome was that Legge adopted "Shang Ti" from the ancient Chinese texts to translate "God" in the Chinese version of the Bible, and very soon he began to translate "Shang Ti" in the English version of the *Chinese Classics* by using the term "God". Starting his career as a missionary, Legge emerged as a well-known sinologist in the nineteenth century while involving himself in two spheres of translation simultaneously, with the conclusion that the two spheres influenced each other. From 1850 onwards, the conviction that "Shang Ti" is "God" and "God" is "Shang Ti" became the battleground that Legge had to fight for. The major arguments developed by Legge actually reflect his interpretation and re-interpretation of the Chinese cultural past and the understanding of the Chinese religious beliefs in relation to the missionary cause. Thus while Legge became one of the most important sinologists in the nineteenth century, his search for the Chinese cultural values remained part of his missionary efforts to reach the Chinese mind. Nine years after the publication of *The Notions of the Chinese* (1852), the first volume of the *Chinese Classics* containing the *Confucian Analects*, the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean* appeared. "Shang Ti" appeared in the texts of the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of Mean* and Legge translated the term as

"God".²⁰ The term "Ti" appeared in the text of *Confucian Analects* and Legge also translated the term as "God" according to the context.²¹ *The Notions of the Chinese* (1852) is quoted by Legge in his translation of the first

²⁰ Legge, *Chinese Classics, Vol. I* (1861), the *Great Learning*, CHAPTER X.5, and commentary, pp. 239-240; the *Doctrine of the Mean*, CHAPTER XIX.6, p. 268; cf. p. 314. INDEX VII of *Chinese Characters and Phrases*, "Shang Ti", God, the most high God.

The translation of the *Doctrine of Mean*, CHAPTER XIX.6 reads: "By the ceremonies of the sacrifice to Heaven and Earth they served God, and by the ceremonies of the ancestral temple they sacrificed to their ancestors. He who understands the ceremonies of the sacrifices to ancestors, would find the government of a kingdom as easy as to look into his palm!"

In the commentary of this passage, Legge wrote: "The two concluding sentences are important, as the Jesuits mainly based on them the defence of their practice in permitting their converts to continue the sacrifices to their ancestors." Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 267-268. What Legge had in mind obviously would not be merely literal translation and a shallow commentary but a distinct picture of China's past and the missionary efforts enacted upon her.

He also referred to his own *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits*, pp. 50-52, that Confucius would regard the service of one being, God, was designed by all those ceremonies to Heaven and Earth; cf. *Chinese Classics, Vol. I*, p. 268..

²¹ Legge, *Chinese Classics, Vol. I, Confucian Analects*, BOOK XX, CHAPTER 1.3, p. 214. Legge, in the following commentary, p. 215, referred to *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits* for the grounds on which he translate "Ti" by God.

Cf. also *Ibid.*, p. 333, INDEX VII, that "Ti" means God or in some other occasions would mean "An emperor".

volume of the Chinese Classics and this further supports the thesis that Legge's scholarship cannot be separated from his translation efforts in connection with his vision of evangelizing China. The "Term Question" was brought into the field of sinological studies because other volumes of the English translation of the *Chinese Classics* clearly demonstrated that "Shang Ti" stands for "God". When the debate among the missionaries died down after 1855, Legge should be seen as the dominant voice in the English-speaking world on the "Term Question" as the *Chinese Classics* appeared in English between 1861 and 1872, and further until 1885 as part of the series of the *Sacred Books of the East*. In 1877, Legge's paper "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" prepared for the first General Missionary Conference held in Shanghai was published. This paper also signified Legge's missionary approach towards Confucianism in another round of debates between Protestant missionaries on the "Term Question" in the late 1870s. The paper was read by William Muirhead, but was later "withdrawn by common consent" from the official proceedings of the Conference "after full consultation", since the paper was seen as bringing into discussion the vexed question of "terms", contrary to the general understanding previously held on this point by those attending the Conference. The general understanding was that the whole subject of "terms" should be dealt with by a special representative committee to whose judgement and discretion it was

entrusted, and that it should not be brought into discussion on the floor of the Conference, as such a discussion was thought more likely to disturb harmony than to settle the question.²² Therefore between the *Notions of the Chinese* (1852) (or to be exact, *An Argument for Shang Te* in 1850) and Legge's published letter to Prof. F. Max Müller in 1880, it would not be an exaggeration to say that Legge was deeply involved in the "Term Question" continuously. Furthermore, other publications by Legge from 1880 onwards still showed substantial body of material in favour of "Shang Ti" as the proper term for God and a deeper and deeper appreciation or sympathetic understanding of Chinese religions. One could even say that Legge's contribution to the *Sacred Books of the East* brought him back into the

²² "The Shanghai Missionary Conference", *The Chinese Recorder* (May-June, 1877), p. 242. The committee on Terms, which consisted of W.A. Russell, R. Lechler, H. Blodget, C. Hartwell, J. Edkins, and C.W. Mateer, made the following report:-

"We, the undersigned, nominated by the committee of arrangements to inquire whether any feasible plan could be found for harmonizing the divergent views of Protestant missionaries as to the best rendering of Elohim and Theos, Ruach and Pneuma into Chinese, regret to have report that we have been unable to discover any satisfactory basis of agreement, and that it has been found impracticable to present a digest of arguments. We have therefore to suggest mutual forbearance, and a prayerful waiting on God for further light and guidance as the only available course under present circumstances."; cf. *Ibid.*, p. 248.

controversy that had continued especially among protestant missionaries for already over three decades. In other words, the scholarship of Legge in the field of sinology did not keep him away from the controversy but rather pulled him again and again back into the controversy. Some passages from his own writings clearly illustrate this point:

... More than twenty-five years ago I came to the conclusion that Tî was the term corresponding in Chinese to our 'God' and that Shang Tî was the same ... In this view I have never wavered, and I have rendered both the names by 'God' in all the volumes of the Chinese Classics thus far translated and published.

What made me pause before doing so in the present volume, was the consideration that the object of 'the Sacred Texts of the Religions of the East', as I understand it, is to give translations of those texts without any colouring in the first place from the views of the translators. *Could it be that my own view of Tî, as meaning God, had grown up in the heat of our controversies in China as to the proper characters to be used for the words God and Spirit, in translating the Sacred Scriptures?* A reader, confronted everywhere by the word God, might be led to think more highly of the primitive religion of China than he ought to think. Should I leave the names Tî and Shang Tî untranslated? Or should I give for them, instead of God, the terms Ruler and Supreme Ruler? I could not see my way to adopt either of these courses.²³

²³ Legge, *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. III, *The Sacred Books of China: the Texts of Confucianism*,

In the preface of the third volume of these 'Sacred Books of the East', ... I have spoken of the Chinese terms Tî and Shang Tî, and shown how I felt it necessary to continue to render them by our word God, as I had done in all my translations of the Chinese classics since 1861. My doing so gave offence to some of the missionaries in China and others; and in June, 1880, twenty-three gentlemen addressed a letter to Professor F. Max Müller, complaining that, in such a work edited by him, he should allow me to give my own private interpretation of the name or names in question instead of translating them or transferring them. ... Since then the matter has rested, and I introduce it again here in this preface, because, though we do not meet with the name in the Yî so frequently as in the Shû and Shih, I have, as before, wherever it does occur, translated it by God. ... When I examined the question, more than thirty years ago, with all possible interest and all the resources at my command, I came to the conclusions that Tî, on its first employment by the Chinese fathers, was intended to express the same concept which our fathers expressed by God ... when I render Tî by God and Shang Tî by the Supreme God ... *I am translating, and not giving a private interpretation of my own.* I do it not in the interests of controversy, but as the simple expression of what to me is truth ...²⁴

Legge spent great efforts in different prefaces of his translations to explain what he had been doing arguing that he indeed was a genuine translator. When the

PART I, the Shû King, the Religious Portions of the Shih King, the Hsião King, "Preface", xxiii-xxiv, dated April 18, 1879. Emphasis by the present writer.

²⁴ Legge, *The Sacred Books of the East, Vol. XVI, The Sacred Books of China: the Texts of Confucianism, PART II, the Yî King. "Preface", xix-xx, dated March 16, 1882. Emphasis by the present writer.*

"Inquirer" charged him as someone who "falsifies history" after the publication of the third volume of the *Sacred Books of the East*, the charge was really serious. It directly challenged Legge's translation under several aspects by accusing Legge as "philologically, mythologically, logically, and historically wrong".²⁵ Legge's response in the preface of the sixteenth volume of the *Sacred Books of the East* should be seen as a clear and firm denial of the charge. To defend himself as a genuine translator, Legge was not only safeguarding his status as a prominent sinologist or his excellence in Chinese scholarship but also championing his translation principle in relation to the missionary cause. In the following "Term Question", Legge's concern on scholarship, translation and evangelization and their interrelationship can be seen more clearly.

The Champion of "Shang Ti"

... I am often amused when I looked back to the years when we thought in China that ... [the "Term Question"] ... was the most important controversy in the world. And it was far from being unimportant, but the

²⁵ Cf. note 9 of this chapter.

recollection of it comes to me, as if it had been a long-enduring nightmare ...²⁶

Legge's sentimental recollection of the continued controversy over several decades among the Protestant missionaries raised a question in the present writer's mind: what Legge's special position in relation to the "Term Question"? Samuel Wells Williams in his article published in 1878, has a long list of missionaries who wrote pamphlets in favour of Shang Ti as the proper word for God in Chinese.²⁷ Among those missionaries Walter H. Medhurst had even more entries than Legge.²⁸ The

²⁶ Legge, *A Letter to Prof. F. Max Müller* (1880), p. 29.

²⁷ Cf. note 18 of this chapter. In Williams' article he has listed 13 leading pamphlets written by at least 7 different missionaries including W.H. Medhurst, George T. Staunton, E. Doty, Legge, S.C. Malan, John Chalmers, C. Hartwell, cf. p. 733.

²⁸ Ibid. W.H. Medhurst had at least five entries while Legge had only three. The most significant publication by Medhurst on this issue would be *A Dissertation on the Theology of the Chinese, with a view to the elucidation of the most appropriate term for expressing the Deity in the Chinese language* (Shanghai: the Mission Press, 1847). All entries by Medhurst were dated between 1847 and 1851.

Legge's entries were: *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850), *Letters on the Rendering of the name God in Chinese* (1850), and *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits* (1852). As mentioned in note 18, Williams discussed Legge's paper in 1877, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity", on pp. 376ff., but strangely did not put it in the list at the beginning of his article. Otherwise there are four entries from Legge.

significance of Legge's contribution to the "Term Question" thus requires further exploration. Donald Treadgold's assessment of Legge's effort in arguing for Shang Ti should not be overlooked.²⁹ Treadgold points out that the "Term Controversy" was no empty debate about the meaning of words as it involved the whole question of whether the ancient Chinese had been monotheistic and the related question of whether Chinese culture had elements ought to respect or whether it should simply be attacked and destroyed.³⁰ Perhaps that is exactly the reason why Legge is so sympathetic to Matteo Ricci's standpoint on the "Term Question". "About the terms I entirely agree with his opinion, nor do I altogether differ with him about the ritual practices," Legge once wrote.³¹ For a

²⁹ Cf. note 10 of this chapter. The present writer would like to pay tribute to Treadgold as someone who probably revived the interest in re-examining Legge's career from a missiological perspective rather than purely on the grounds of sinological studies. But Treadgold's terminology and categorization have to be treated carefully.

³⁰ Treadgold, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44.

³¹ Legge's response to Matteo Ricci's reply to the following questions:

"Did the Chinese really mean God when they spoke of T'ien (Heaven) and Shang Ti (the Supreme Ruler)? and might the converts be permitted still to use those terms? Was it really religious worship which they paid to Confucius, and to their parents and ancestors in their mourning rites, or merely the expression of their grateful homage to the Sage, and of their

Protestant missionary of the nineteenth century to appreciate or even identify himself with the cause of a sixteenth century Roman Catholic missionary would be quite amazing in those days. Such manner would be enough to arouse another round of controversy.

In *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850), after about twelve years of learning Chinese, Legge began to expound his own views on the proper rendering of the words Elohim and Theos in the Chinese language. At the beginning of this pamphlet, Legge admitted that after "most studious research", he and W.H. Medhurst had not been able to find any one term that fully answered to the words, Elohim and Theos, as employed in the Old and New Testaments.³² Then Legge tried to respond to Dr. Boone (i.e., Bishop William J. Boone)'s argument. Boone's argument has runs like this:

We must seek either the name of the Being to whom they have ascribed the most glorious attributes; or, discarding this, we must use the generic name for God, i.e. the name of the highest class of Beings to whom the Chinese are

filial piety? and might the converts still be allowed to pay it? Ricci had replied to these questions in the affirmative."

Cf. Legge, *The Nestorian Monument* (1888), p. 58. Legge's response was quoted in Treadgold's book, p. 44.

³² Legge, *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850), p.2.

in the habit of offering religious worship. There is no middle course between these two points ...³³

Legge agreed that there might not be a middle course between the two points mentioned but he put forward that there might be a different course altogether that would lead to a satisfactory solution.³⁴ Legge first denied that "God is a generic term".³⁵ "It cannot not be that God, Elohim, or Theos, is of the class denominated generic." Legge thus suggested that like father and son, husband and wife, king and subjects, God should be treated as a relative term alongside with creatures. "As soon as the first man was called into existence, Jehovah stood to him in the relation of God. Man was His creature. It was his duty to remember His creator to adore Him, to serve Him."³⁶ Legge argued by using the biblical text from Romans 1:21-23 and 25 that truth existed before falsehood and men served the true God before they wrongly imagined any other. When they took His attributes and gave them to other real or fictitious beings, they called them by the

³³ Legge, op. cit., p. 3. Quoted from Boone's *An Essay on the proper rendering of the words Elohim and Theos into the Chinese Language* (Canton, 1848), pp. 7-8.

³⁴ Legge, Ibid.

³⁵ Legge, Ibid.

³⁶ Legge, Ibid., p. 5.

name which belonged to Him only.³⁷ Quoting from the general scholium appended by Sir Issac Newton to his *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, Legge tried to demonstrate that the word God is a relative term and "everywhere signifies God". "The word, everywhere signifies lord, but every lord is not God. It is the dominion of a spiritual being that constitutes God; true dominion, true God: Supreme, the supreme: feigned, the false God." According to this understanding, Elohim, Theos, or God, should be seen as a term expressing the relation of a governing spirit to His creatures.³⁸ Legge then summarized his arguments as follows:

First, Elohim, Theos, or God, is properly a term applied only to the Supreme Being, and the application of it to what we call a false god or idol, or any other being or thing, is a misuse of it.

Second, Elohim, Theos, or God, is not a generic but a relative term, has regard to servants, and implies dominion.³⁹

Building on this ground, Legge refused to accept "Shin" as the proper translation of God since "Shin" is a

³⁷ Legge, Ibid., p. 6.

³⁸ Legge, Ibid., p. 7.

³⁹ Legge, Ibid., p. 8.

generic term.⁴⁰ Legge thus put forward his own alternative in the following way:

... We now want a term in Chinese, which shall express the relation of supreme authority inhering in a spiritual Being. Such a term is not far to seek. We have it in their oldest and their most modern books. We have it in their every day language. It is the term [SHANG TE].⁴¹
...

... I rejoice to acknowledge in the Shang Te of the Chinese classics, and the Shang Te of the Chinese people, Him who is God over all, blessed for ever. He has not left Himself without great witness among the many millions, and many generations of the inhabitants of this great Empire. ... There is at least one Protestant Missionary, who does not "admit that the Chinese do not know the true God". ...⁴²

Starting from *An Argument for Shang Te* (1850), Legge developed his thesis further in *The Notions for the Chinese concerning God and Spirits* (1852):

My thesis is - that the Chinese possess a knowledge of the true God, and that the highest Being whom they worship is indeed the same whom we worship. But they not only worship Him; they worship a multitude of beings besides, and with their knowledge of God have associated a mass of superstition and follies ... concerning the

⁴⁰ Legge, *Ibid.*, pp. 9ff.

⁴¹ Legge, *Ibid.*, pp. 25-6. Legge put the term "SHANG TE" in bold Chinese characters in the original pamphlet.

⁴² Legge, *Ibid.*, p. 32. The "one Protestant Missionary" certainly would be Legge himself. He definitely developed this point in his later works.

religion of the Chinese. I am not vindicating it, but I am satisfied that in it there is the knowledge and worship of the true God.⁴³

Translating passage after passage from "The Collected statutes of the Ming Dynasty" which included a variety of prayers and hymns for the great services offered to "Shang Ti" in the Ming dynasty by the Emperor of China,⁴⁴ Legge draws the following conclusion:

... "Who is He, whom the Chinese thus worship?" We read in Jeremiah, "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth, and from under those heavens;" but *Shang Te* cannot be among them. He made the heavens and the earth and man. He is the true parent of all things. *His* love is over all *His* works. He is the great and lofty One, whose dominion is everlasting. *His* years are without end. *His* goodness is infinite. Spirits and men are alike under *His* government. They rejoice in *Him*, and praise *His* great name, though they cannot reach to its comprehension, for it is inexhaustible, unmeasurable. That is what China holds, and in her highest exercises of devotion, declares concerning *Shang Te*. I am confident the Christian world will agree with me in saying, "This God is our God".⁴⁵

... But the Chinese stand out distinctly from all other heathen nations in these two points — that their representations of *Shang-Te* are consistent throughout, and that they never raise any other being to an approximation to Him. He is always the same — the Creator and

⁴³ Legge, *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits* (1852), p. 23.

⁴⁴ Legge, *Ibid.*, pp. 23-31.

⁴⁵ Legge, *Ibid.*, p. 31. Emphasis by Legge himself.

Sovereign Ruler, holy and just and good. ... Their Religion is now what it was four thousand years ago - I do not say a pure monotheism, but certainly a monotheism, and the God whom they worship, we learn from His attributes, is the same whom we adore, as He has been pleased in much larger measure to reveal Himself to us.⁴⁶

Legge thus not just simply advocating the use of "Shang Ti" as the proper translation of "God" but also

⁴⁶ Legge, Ibid., p. 33. On p. 32 of the same work, Legge also wrote:

"To Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, God was not known by the name Jehovah - the self-existent Being. Yet they knew the true God. ... Just so it is with the Chinese. It is evident they know the true God. One of the hymns which I have given might be supposed to be composed from the chapter of Genesis. But, so far as I know, they have not distinctly apprehended His self-existence. Their notions of Shang-Te presuppose it. They lie, as it were, in their minds, wrapped round about with it."

The hymn Legge mentioned in the above quotation appeared in its translated form on p. 28 of the same work with the Chinese original attached underneath:

Song 1st - To greet the approach of the Spirit of Shang-Te.

Of old in the beginning, there was the great chaos, without form and dark. The five elements had not begun to revolve, nor the sun and the moon to shine. In the midst thereof there existed neither form nor sound. Thou, O spiritual Sovereign, camest forth in Thy presidency, and first didst divide the grosser parts from the purer. Thou madest heaven; Thou madest earth; Thou madest man. All things with their re-producing power, got their being.

arguing that the religion of China was, and also is, a monotheism.

... Learning the ancient classics, and the discussion of individual sentences, we have witnessed what is the actual worship of the Chinese. We have made the appeal to the historical statutes of the empire. The result, it seems to me, is such as ought to make us thankful that God has not let himself without witness, varied and convincing, among this vast portion of His human family.⁴⁷

Legge even said that if the missionaries abandon the use of "Shang Te" for God, "we cut ourselves off from all sympathy with the Chinese people".⁴⁸ Though Legge may not have had the modern idea of an inculturated Christianity in mind, to him the use of "Shang Ti" was probably essential for the Christian faith to be rooted deeply on Chinese soil.

A quarter of a century elapsed after the publication of *The Notions of the Chinese* (1852), and then another piece of work by Legge that raised controversy again was published under rather special circumstances. On the front page of this published work there was a short note recording the incident briefly.⁴⁹ The note described how

⁴⁷ Legge, *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁴⁸ Legge, *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁴⁹ The full title of the published paper reads "Confucianism in relation to Christianity. A paper read before the Missionary Conference in Shanghai,

the paper was written at the request of the Committee of Arrangements for the General Missionary Conference held at Shanghai in May, 1877. The paper was read in full assembly, but the Conference by a vote decided to omit it from the printed record of proceedings, in deference to the wishes of those who regarded it as taking one side in the controversy respecting the term to be used for God in the Chinese Language. This short note also gave the reason why the paper was eventually published:

In view of the author's reputation as the translator of the Chinese Classics, his zeal and success as a missionary far more than thirty years, the sympathy he still maintains with the work of missions, and the intrinsic value of the essay itself, many of his friends, members of the Conference and others, have deemed it a duty to publish it. They do this in the belief, that, as the result of nearly 40 years' study of the Confucian books, *it will be found most helpful to missionaries, and to students of the Confucian teachings generally.*⁵⁰

The paper was written under the rubric of a special conference theme: the religious and moral teachings in the Confucian books in relations to Christianity.⁵¹ This special theme was developed under three heads: (i) what

on May 11th, 1877." (Shanghai, Kelly and Walsh; London, Trübner and Co., 1877). The paper was dated "Oxford, March 20th, 1877" on p. 1.

⁵⁰ Legge, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877), front page. Emphasis by the present writer.

⁵¹ Legge, *Ibid.*, p.3.

the Confucian books contain about God and other objects of religious worship;⁵² (ii) what these books contain about man and his nature and about a future state of such;⁵³ (iii) what these books contain about the moral and social duties of man.⁵⁴

On the first topic, Legge made his viewpoint very clear. He felt increasingly that missionaries ought to congratulate themselves that "there is so much in Confucianism about God", of which the missionaries could avail themselves in setting forth their fuller truth.⁵⁵ Then read the following passages that probably had scandalized a lot of the missionaries present at the Conference:

... All the members ... will not agree with me, when I repeat here my well-known conviction that the Ti and Shang-ti of the Chinese Classics is God - our God - the true God. ... In order to bring our Chinese readers and hearers to think as we do about God, missionaries must supplement largely the statements in the Confucian books about Him. ...⁵⁶

... There had been in China from the time immemorial, along with the worship of God, a

⁵² Legge, Ibid., pp. 3-6.

⁵³ Legge, Ibid., pp. 6-9.

⁵⁴ Legge, Ibid., pp. 9-12.

⁵⁵ Legge, Ibid., p. 3.

⁵⁶ Legge, Ibid.

corrupt and depraving admixture of the worship of other beings ... But it is to be observed, that the early Chinese did not see in the various worship that they practised anything inconsistent with their ideas of Shang-ti, and the worship which the sovereign as the father and high priest of the people, renders to Him. ...⁵⁷

Quoting from *The Notions of the Chinese* (1852) of the Ming emperor's preliminary prayer at the great services in 1538, Legge said that "the emperor of China worships one God, and many other imaginary spiritual beings, who are under Him and inferior to Him, but who may act the part of mediators between the worshipper and Him." Legge suggested that "the missionary must condemn all this worship of inferior beings; but in doing so, let him freely recognize the difference between that there is in Confucianism between God and them", and that the worship of these inferior beings would disappear "when the Christian system has been fully made known throughout the empire".⁵⁸ Though Legge showed a very deep appreciation of Confucianism throughout the paper, from the passages quoted it would be difficult to treat Legge's approach to the religions of China as mere

⁵⁷ Legge, *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁸ Legge, *Ibid.*, p. 6. The prayer Legge referred to was translated into English in *The Notions of the Chinese* (1852), p. 26.

"syncretism".⁵⁹ What Legge had in mind was not just to add Christian faith on top of the Chinese cultural heritage and look for an appropriate mixture come out of it. He would see the task of the missionaries to be more radical:

⁵⁹ Donald Treadgold; op. cit., pp. 185-186 and pp. 192-193, placed Legge with Matteo Ricci as exponents of "syncretism". In Treadgold's understanding, a syncretist like Ricci or Legge would want to preserve all that was great and valuable in Chinese culture and add to it the Christian religion and the most advanced Western learning of the day, Treadgold even saw that Ricci offered a solution to the problems caused from the encounter between the West and the non-west. He treated Ricci's solution as one of the noblest variants of syncretism and formulated it as follows: "regard the indigenous culture with respect; assume that it has viability among the people concerned, unless the contrary can be shown, and that it is worthy of the interest of people in other countries; seek unity only in the major assumptions of religious thought, and leave all other areas of thought to develop by way of the free exchange of ideas within countries and across frontiers", cf. p. 192. Treadgold also wrote: "Syncretism is not a phase of Western influence, but an indirect result of Western influence in thought. Using the term to mean a fusion of indigenous with Western ideas or cultural characteristics, we find it present in both Russia and China." (p. 185) "James Legge had a vision of the possibility of syncretism, but no Chinese - except for the potentially crucial, actually not very significant example of Hung Jen-ken - caught it and tried to translate it into reality." (p. 186)

The present writer would argue that Legge was not simply a "syncretist" and the example of Hung Jen-kan was not merely "potentially crucial" but also very significant indeed in the chapter dealing with the co-agents of Legge's task of translation in relation to scholarship and evangelization.

... Christianity cannot be tacked on to any heathen religion as its complement, nor can it absorb any into itself without great changes in it and additions to it. *Missionaries have not merely to reform*, though it will be well to reform where and what they can; *they have to revolutionize*; and as no revolution of a political kind can be effected without disturbance of existing conditions, so neither can a revolution of a people's religion be brought about without heat and excitement. *Confucianism is not antagonistic to Christianity* ... It is, however, a system whose issues are bounded by the East and by time; and though missionaries try to acknowledge what is good in it, and to use it as not abusing it, they cannot avoid sometimes seeming to pull down Confucius from his elevation. ... Let them seek to go about their work everywhere ... in the Spirit of Christ, without striving or crying, with meekness and lowliness of heart. Let no one think any labour too great to make himself familiar with the Confucian books, so shall missionaries in China come fully to understand the work they have to do; and the more they avoid driving their carriages over the master's grave, the more likely are they soon to see Jesus enthroned in His room in the hearts of the people.⁶⁰

Legge basically should not be seen as a "syncretist" but more like a "transformer" if the translation principle mentioned in the previous chapter applies here. He sought for "transformation" more than simply "substitution" or "replacement". The interesting thing was that the participants at the Shanghai Conference in 1877 failed to recognize the significance of this paper

⁶⁰ Legge, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877), p. 12. Emphasis by the present writer.

as though they were almost all blinded by the "Term Question" at first sight. The concluding remarks of this paper moved beyond the issue of the "Term Question" to a new plane of missiological understanding of culture and "heathen" religions. The present writer would argue that the passage quoted above should be seen as a new landmark in the history of modern Christian missions. However, it seems to me that Legge never had a chance to build up on this paper a more coherent and systematic missiology. Otherwise he certainly would not only be remembered as a great sinologist but also as a prominent missiologist of his time. After 1877, as he committed himself in the translation of several more volumes of the Chinese classical texts, his direct impact on the mission field was apparently diminishing. Again the "Term Question" returned as the dominant factor occupying the stage of his scholarship and translation and to a certain extent, overshadowed his insights in the area of evangelization.

Between 1852 and 1877, the translation of the *Chinese Classics* should be seen as the continuation of Legge's involvement in the "Term Question" which incidentally elevated him to the status as "the fittest and most deserving occupant of the [Chinese] Chair established at last in Oxford", and also as "the foremost

and soundest translator and commentator of the Chinese Classics".⁶¹ In 1873, before he returned to Britain for good he made one special gesture while visiting the capital of the Celestial Empire. Treadgold described it in such terms:

... Legge left no doubt of his conversion to the belief that classical Confucianism had been monotheistic, and demonstrated it by removing his shoes on entering the Altar of Heaven in Peking and declaring, 'This is holy ground', to the horror of his fellow evangelicals.⁶²

⁶¹ "Short Notices - Inaugural Lecture by Dr. Legge", *China Review* 5:4 (July 1876 - June 1877), p. 261.

⁶² Treadgold, op. cit., pp. 44; cf. p. 207 note 38, "He could scarcely have chosen a more effective way of scandalizing his critics." However, it seems to me that Legge did not intend to scandalize his critics through such action. He regarded this significant event on different occasions: "In going up to the altar of Heaven I took my shoes off, and around the circular stone where the Emperor performs his prostrations we stood and sang the doxology, 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow'." Legge, "Journey in North China and America", p. 12, dated April 22, 1873, Peking. The day he went up the altar of Heaven would most probably be April 21 and he was accompanied by Dr. John Dudgeon, a LMS medical missionary stationed at Peking. This typed manuscript can be found in LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 7. "It is indeed a wonderful fact to think of, that a worship of the one God has been maintained in the vicinity of their capitals by the sovereigns of China almost continuously for more than four thousand years. I felt this fact profoundly when I stood early one morning by the altar of Heaven, in the southern suburb of Peking. It was without my shoes that I went up to the top of it; and there around the central slab of the marble with which it was paved,

Legge did not want to horrify his "fellow evangelicals". What he did was a kind of spontaneous devotional expression to acknowledge that the worship of Shang Ti in ancient China should not be treated as "antagonistic" to Christianity. Or in other words Legge just wanted to show his appreciation and recognition of classical Confucianism in terms of religious behaviour. Legge did not only translate the *Chinese Classics* to prove his point. He showed his genuine respect for the ancient religion of China by his own deed, his own concrete action, by taking his shoes off in ascending the altar of Heaven. To him it was a kind of powerful experience.

free of flaw as the cerulean vault above, hand in hand with the friends who accompanied me, I joined in singing the doxology ..." cf. Legge, *Religions of China* (1880), p. 251.

Kwok Pui-lan, "Chinese Women and Christianity, 1860-1927", Th.D. Thesis at Harvard Divinity School, Harvard University, 1989, p. 51, had the following comment:

"Among the missionaries, Legge, the illustrious translator of Chinese classics, was most appreciative of Chinese culture. He went one step further than most of the missionaries to identify the Shangdi of the Chinese with the Christian God, and once he even ascended with his shoes off the altar of heaven, where Shangdi was worshipped."

In the preface to Legge's first contribution to *The Sacred Books of the East* in 1879, he had no hesitation in dealing with the "Term Question" and set forth his viewpoint clearly at the outset.⁶³

The term *Heaven* ... is used everywhere in the Chinese Classics for the Supreme Power, ruling and governing all the affairs of men with an omnipotent and omniscient righteousness and goodness; and this vague term is constantly interchanged in the same paragraph, not to say the same sentence, with the personal names *Ti* and *Shang Ti*. ...⁶⁴

... Here then is the name *Heaven*, by which the idea of Supreme Power in the absolute is vaguely expressed; and when the Chinese would speak of it by a personal name, they use the term *Ti* and *Shang Ti*; - saying, I believe, what our early fathers did, when they began to use the word God. *Ti* is the name which has been employed in China for this concept for fully 5000 years. Our word God fits naturally into every passage where the character occurs in the old Chinese Classics. ... It never became with the people a proper name like the Zeus of the Greeks. I can no more translate *Ti* or *Shang Ti* by any other word but God ...⁶⁵

Legge's words, however, as mentioned in the preface of his second work to *The Sacred Book of the East* in 1882,⁶⁶ created another round of controversy. The leading

⁶³ Cf. note 23 of this chapter.

⁶⁴ Ibid., xxiv. Emphasis by the present writer.

⁶⁵ Ibid., xxiv. Emphasis by the present writer.

⁶⁶ Cf. note 24 of this chapter.

opponent in this case was the "Inquirer" who criticized Legge as giving a gloss that "falsifies history" in *The Chinese Recorder*.⁶⁷ As Legge accepted that Heaven ("Thien" or "Tien") was used interchangeably in the Chinese Classics with "Ti" and "Shang Ti" for designating "God", the "Inquirer" tried to dispute with Legge in the following way:

*I agree with Legge in the opinion that by the word Tien, Heaven, the Chinese in their classics or so called Sacred Books, designating the Being whom they suppose is the Supreme Power in Being; a Being exercising power and control, setting up and displacing Kings and Rulers. To this Being they attribute many divine attributes and works. He is the chief object of reverence and worship. I agree with Legge that this Being is also frequently, in these Books, called Ti and Shangti — these words are designations of the same Being who is called Heaven. But I differ from Dr. Legge on this fundamental point as to what Being is called Heaven in these Books — my belief is that the Being thus revered and worshipped by the Chinese and called Heaven — the deified Heaven, the visible Heaven considered as a god — as the chief god of the Chinese.*⁶⁸

Then the "Inquirer" set forth his propositions that:

(i) for that chief god of the Sacred Books, its proper name is Tien; (ii) that the chief power designated Heaven, no other than the visible Heaven regarded as a god; (iii) that this chief power is the visible Heaven

⁶⁷ Cf. note 9 of this chapter.

⁶⁸ Ibid., xxiv. Emphasis by the present writer.

Emperor conjointly with the sun, moon, and stars, and the powers of nature.⁷³ The "Inquirer" concluded that Dr. Legge's own mind had been the victim of a mere illusion and his view was merely "an individual opinion" that could even mislead the prosecution of the study of comparative mythology.⁷⁴ The charge by the "Inquirer" pushed Legge to defend his own viewpoint once again by the published letter to the editor of *The Sacred Books of the East* in 1880.⁷⁵ But even before the debate with the "Inquirer", Legge has already published his lectures on *The Religions of China*.⁷⁶

If we look at the debate between Legge and the "Inquirer" as a battle for "Heaven", then *The Religions of China* (1880) can be seen as another major manifesto for Legge's recognition, respect and appreciation of the religions of China, this time not only classical Confucianism but also Taoism as both a religion and a philosophy. Gradually Legge moved beyond the arena of the "Term Question" in his sinological studies and his sympathetic understanding of the Chinese cultural heritage. In *The Religions of China*, Legge emphasized

⁷³ Ibid., p. 184.

⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 185-186.

⁷⁵ Cf. note 4 of Chapter Two and note 4 of this chapter.

⁷⁶ Cf. note 107 of Chapter Two.

that Confucianism should be understood as the ancient religion of China⁷⁷ and that the error of not regarding Confucius as a religious teacher should be avoided.⁷⁸ Legge then argued that the earlier thoughts of the Chinese on religion are to be sought for in their primitive written characters.⁷⁹ The character for heaven, "t'ien" and "Tî", are constantly interchanged throughout the Shû and the Shih, the ancient books of History and Poetry.⁸⁰ Legge pushed this idea further as follows:

... Since its earliest formation, Tî has properly been the personal name of Heaven. T'ien has had much of the force of the name Jahve [YHWH], as explained by God Himself to Moses; Tî has presented that absolute deity in the relation to men of their lord and governor. Tî was to the Chinese fathers, I believe, exactly what God was to our fathers, whenever they took the great name on their lips.⁸¹

Thus the two characters [Ti and Tien] show us the religion of the ancient Chinese as a monotheism. How it was with them more than five thousand years ago, we have no means of knowing; but to find this among them at that

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 4-6.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 8-10. The idea is very similar to what Legge has written in the preface of the third volume of *The Sacred Books of the East*, xxiv, cf. note 64 of this chapter.

⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 10-11. The similarity can also be drawn with another passage in the preface mentioned in the note above, cf. note 65 of this chapter.

remote and early period was worth some toilsome digging among the roots of primitive written characters. I will only add here that the relation of the two names which have been considering has kept the monotheistic element prominent in the religion proper of China down to the present time, and prevented the prostitution of the name Tî ...⁸²

As noticed in the preface of the third volume of *The Sacred Books of the East*, Legge not only championed the use of "Shang Ti" for God but also advocated the use of "Ti" and "Tien". Though not exactly breaking new grounds in the "Term Question", Legge argued strongly throughout the first two chapters of *The Religions of China* for the religion of the ancient as a monotheism. And we must not overlook the fact that *The Religions of China* was originally a series of lectures addressed to the members of the Presbyterian Church of England.⁸³ The whole setting of the publication of this work was not merely a contribution to the field of sinology but also related to the missionary cause. The present writer would like to leave this masterpiece for a while but will return to it in another section of this chapter. The reason is that the debate between Legge and the "Inquirer" was a clear continuation of the "Term Question" while *The Religions*

⁸² Ibid., p. 11. Emphasis by the present writer.

⁸³ Cf. note 107 of Chapter Two.

of China, in my own judgement, moved beyond that question.

In his reply to the "Inquirer", Legge showed that the whole question could be traced back to the early day of the controversy among the Protestant missionaries. "I merely reproduced the rendering which I had been giving to the world at intervals since 1852."⁸⁴ 1852 was the year which Legge published *The Notions of the Chinese concerning God and Spirits*. Legge also admitted that the whole discussion to his mind had an inseparable connexion with the "Term Question".⁸⁵ Furthermore, Legge wrote, "my impression was, and is, that a majority of Chinese scholars accept my rendering with approval."⁸⁶ Responding

⁸⁴ Legge, *A Letter to Professor F. Max Müller* (1880), p. 4.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 4. Cf. Kwok Pui-lan, "Chinese Women and Christianity, 1860-1927", pp. 51-52, especially notes 30-33. Kwok quotes sources from the *Wanguo Gongbao* (*The Globe Magazine*) and the *Chinese Recorder* to support the following statements:

"The religious writings of the Chinese and the direct observation of the missionaries both confirmed that the majority of Chinese Christians preferred *Shangdi* rather than *shen*. In certain cases, even when the missionaries used *shen*, Chinese Christians still chose the term *shangdi*, and their strong preference, for instance in Fujian, motivated the missionaries to change to *shangdi* as well. The choice of *shangdi* over *shen* would be attributed to many reasons: the term

to the charge by the "Inquirer" that Legge himself held that "Thien" (or "Tien") is Jehovah, Legge wrote, "Tî is God; Shang Tî is the Supreme God. Thien is God under the conception of Him as 'the Great One'. Jehovah is God under the conception of Him as the 'Self-existent'. The four names designate the same Being, but each tells its own story of Him."⁸⁷ Heaven or "Thien", in the mind of the "Inquirer", was a visible symbol and an image of an idol but for Legge, "Thien" signifies God and not the visible firmament.⁸⁸ The "Inquirer" also argued that the visible heaven, when deified, became the chief god of the Chinese. Legge replied by saying that the name for the idea of Deity was Tî and the process of deification was by styling Heaven as Tî, and intensifying the title by the addition of Shang into Shang Tî.⁸⁹ Legge then added that his views about the theology in the Chinese

shangdi is embedded in the Chinese classics, denoting the highest idea of supreme ruler, while *shen* refers to the numerous popular deities, who hardly command respect. Some Chinese Christians were, perhaps, eager to demonstrate that Christianity was not a foreign religion. For them, the Chinese classics pointed to the same God, who was called by another name, Yahweh, in the Christian Bible." (Emphasis by the original author.)

⁸⁷ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 7.

⁸⁸ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 8ff.

⁸⁹ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 17.

Classics, whether such views were correct or not, would not affect the rendering of the terms, "... whether Jupiter was the true god or a false one does not concern our use of the word God in translating Theos or Deus; and whether Thien be the true God, or merely the chief god of the Chinese, we are equally correct in using Tî to translate Elohim or Theos ..."⁹⁰ It was in this context that he poured out his mind on the relation between his scholarship in sinology and the missionary cause as quoted at the beginning of Chapter Two in this thesis.⁹¹ With the benefit of missionaries always in his thoughts, Legge continued to write about his feelings concerning this prolonged debate on the terms:

... If I have lost the sympathy and confidence of any of them by making known the conclusion to which I came, I am sorry for it, — on their account more than on my own. They will bear with me, I hope, when I reiterate my conviction that my conclusions are correct, and venture, after the manner of Paul with the Galatians, to entreat them not to think of me, because I tell them the truth, as their enemy, or the enemy of the work in which I am still as much interested as themselves.⁹²

⁹⁰ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 18.

⁹¹ Cf. note 4 of Chapter Two.

⁹² Legge, *ibid.*, p. 19. Though the present writer so far has not yet found any documents supporting that Legge was an admirer of Erasmus (1469-1536), the feeling that Legge belonged to an Erasmian tradition that linked scholarship, translation, and practical

Quoting again from *The Notions of Chinese* (1852) that "the first prayer or hymn used at the special solstitial service of 1538 was composed from the first chapter of Genesis", Legge repeated that it was the privilege of missionaries to quicken the Chinese to the recognition that they knew the true God though they had not distinctly apprehended and expressed His self-existence.⁹³ Legge then stressed that while "Thien" might by and by be used less frequently by the Chinese as they becomes familiar with the Sacred Scriptures, it still would be the representative of God to them and certainly a conception of God which should not be despised.⁹⁴ Underlining the missionary cause, Legge remarked:

... But I contend that the views of a primitive monotheism in China is more in accordance with the testimony of the Bible than any other, and the usage of Thien and Tî, all along the course of history, struggling against the corruptions of that primitive monotheism ... is most honouring to God, and shows how He has never left Himself without witness among the many-millions of people of the Chinese empire ... And moreover, when translating the Scriptures and preaching the gospel, missionaries cannot bring their truth into contact with the minds of their readers hearers

Christian values together is very strong. The quotation also shows a taste of the Erasmian spirit.

⁹³ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 19-20. Cf. *The Notions of the Chinese* (1852), pp. 28 and 32, and also note 46 of this chapter.

⁹⁴ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 20.

so effectually as by using Tî and Shang Tî for God.⁹⁵

Legge even saw that the rejection of "Shang Ti" by the Roman Catholic missionaries for "God" actually led to the collapse of their mission in China, as they supposed Tî's primary meaning was emperor and not God.

... If they had clearly apprehended its true meaning ... I believe they would have been saved from the controversy about the terms, which embittered their relations among themselves, embroiled them with the emperors of China, operated disastrously to check the progress of their missions, and entailed the discordant views which now keep the Protestant missionaries in different camps ...⁹⁶

Legge then emphasised the using of "Shân" (or Shen, Shin) for spirit as important. When the occupants of that camp advocating the use of "Shin" for God united with all the other missionaries in using "Shin" for spirit, Legge said that he was comparatively little concerned whether they selected to use "Shang Ti" or even "Tien Chu" ("Lord of Heaven", or "Tian Zhu") for God.⁹⁷ The translation, according to his own words, should be seen as "the most

⁹⁵ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 22.

⁹⁶ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 24.

⁹⁷ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 25-28.

important contribution" that he could render to the furtherance of missionary objects in China.⁹⁸

Coming to the sixteenth volume of *The Sacred Books of the East*, Legge again just could not avoid the "Term Question".⁹⁹ In the preface of this volume, Legge voiced his insights about translation and moved his concerns onto another level.¹⁰⁰ He sought to engage himself not in a literal or mechanical kind of translation but "the seeing of mind to mind". In the preface of the translation of the two volumes of *Lî Kî*, Legge at last found no need to reiterate his views on the "Term

⁹⁸ Legge wrote this on a very special occasion. He was actually writing a "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen" at the request from the London Missionary Society. The original manuscript a letter to the LMS dated March 19, 1872 in LMS Archives, South China - Incoming Letters, Box 7, Folder 2, Jacket A. A typed manuscript can be found in the LMS Archives, China - Personal Papers - J. Legge, Box 7. The quotation can be found on p. 11 of the typed manuscript when Legge talked about how the translation of the *Chinese Classics* has kept him to "maintain the same constant intercourse with Tsun-sheen as in earlier years, and to be directing him and keeping him at work". More on Ho Tsun-sheen will be dealt with in the chapter on the co-agents of Legge's translation.

The quotation also reflects that Legge always had the translation in his mind as something fundamental to the missionary cause in China.

⁹⁹ Cf. note 24 of this chapter.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. note 86 of Chapter Two.

Question".¹⁰¹ Legge was certainly proud that the translation was probably the first published in any European language of the whole of the *Lî Kî*, as he mentioned this twice in the preface.¹⁰² He began the translation before he left China in 1873 and began again early in 1883 to prepare for the present version. In doing so, he probably missed his Chinese co-agents, especially Wang Tao. Such feelings leaked out from the following words:

... I can hardly hope that, in translating so extensive and peculiar a work, descriptive of customs and things at so remote a period of time, and *without the assistance of any Chinese graduate* with whom I could have talked over complicated and perplexing paragraphs, I may not have fallen into some mistakes ...¹⁰³

However, with the publication of the *Lî Kî*, Legge had finally accomplished the feat of translating all the "Five Kings" of the Confucian classics into English single-handedly. Not contented with interest only in Confucian texts, Legge moved on from *The Religions of*

¹⁰¹ Legge, *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXVII and XXVIII, *The Sacred Books of China: the Texts of Confucianism*, PART III: *The Lî Kî*, "Preface", xi-xiv, dated July 10, 1885.

¹⁰² Legge, *ibid.*, xi and xiii.

¹⁰³ Legge, *ibid.*, xiii-xiv. Emphasis by the present writer. Wang Tao and his relationship with Legge will be dealt with in another chapter on Legge's co-agents of translation.

China (1880) to other religious texts of ancient China. The major publication was the *The Texts of Taoism* (1891) in the *The Sacred Books of the East* in two volumes.¹⁰⁴ In the twelve-page preface to the *The Texts of Taoism* Legge ventured on the history of the translation of the texts of Taoism and did not touch on the "Term Question" anymore.¹⁰⁵ But in the introduction to the volume, Legge, as usual still had to mention "Ti" and "Heaven".

Next in importance to Tâo is the name Thien, meaning at first the vaulted sky or the open firmament of heaven. In the Confucian Classics, and in the speech of the Chinese people, this name is used metaphorically as it is by ourselves for the Supreme Being, with reference especially to His will and rule. ... The Taoist fathers found this among their people; but in their idea of the Tâo they had already a Supreme Concept which superseded the necessity of any other. The name Tî for God only occurs once in the Tâo The King ... Nor is the name Thien very common ... Never once is Thien used in the sense of God, the Supreme Being.¹⁰⁶

The employment of Thien by the Confucianists, as of Heaven by ourselves, must be distinguished therefore from the Tâoistic use of the name to denote the quiet by mighty influence of the impersonal Tâo; and to translate it by 'God' only obscures the meaning

¹⁰⁴ Cf. note 83 of Chapter Two.

¹⁰⁵ Legge, *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXIX, *The Sacred Books of China: the Texts of Taoism*, PART I: *The Tâo Teh King, The Writings of Kwang-Tze*, BOOK I-XVII, "Preface", xi-xxii, dated December 20, 1890.

¹⁰⁶ Legge, *ibid.*, "introduction", p. 16.

of the Tâoist writers. ... The Confucianists often used thien metaphorically for the personal Being whom they denominated Tî (God) and Shang Tî (the Supreme God), and a translator may occasionally, in working on books of Confucian literature, employ our name God for it. But neither Lâo nor Kwang¹⁰⁷ ever attached anything like our idea of God to it; and when one, in working on books of early Taoist literature, translates thien by God, such a rendering must fail to produce in an English reader a correct apprehension of the meaning.¹⁰⁸

Legge demonstrated that in different systems of thought, the idea of "Heaven" would be different and this would lead to different translation of the same character like "Tien", "Ti" or "Shang Ti". *The Texts of Taoism* represented Legge's further development or "transformation" in his understanding of Chinese culture. The present writer would like to discuss such development in the coming section. Nevertheless, between the publication of the two volumes of *Lî Kî* in 1885 and the two volumes of *The Texts of Taoism* in 1891, Legge published two more works. The first was *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms, Being An Account by the Chinese Monk Fa-Hien of His Travels in India and Ceylon (A.D. 389-414) in Search of the Buddhist Books of Discipline* published

¹⁰⁷ Lâo-tze (Lao Zi, born about the year B.C. 604) and Kwang-tze (Zhuang Zi, of the fourth century B.C.) are supposed to be the authors of the early Taoist texts, cf. Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 1-12., and pp. 33-38.

¹⁰⁸ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 17.

by the Clarendon press at Oxford in 1886. The work showed Legge's interest in the Buddhist tradition of China and did not relate to the "Term Question" on the surface. The second was *The Nestorian Monument of Hsî-an Fû in Shen-hsî, China*, published in 1888.¹⁰⁹ In this work, Legge identified himself with Matteo Ricci's viewpoint on the "Term Question"¹¹⁰ and again went beyond that. His comments on the Roman Catholic missions in China are just astonishing:

We must come down to the close of the sixteenth century to find the commencement of the great Roman Catholic missions in China ... Ricci especially was a man amongst men. ... He was a man of great scientific acquirements, of invincible perseverance, of various resource, and of winning manners, maintaining with all these gifts a single eye to the conversion of the Chinese, the bringing the people of all ranks to the faith of Christianity ...¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ The full title of the book reads *The Nestorian Monument of Hsî-an Fû in Shen-hsî, China, relating to the Diffusion of Christianity in China in the seventh and eighth centuries with the Chinese text of the Inscription, a Translation, and Notes and a Lecture on the Monument with a Sketch of Subsequent Christian Missions in China and their present state*, published by Trübner and Co. at London. The book was based on his lecture on the same subject at Oxford. The "preface" of the book was dated March 28, 1888, and the date of the lecture, according to Helen Edith Legge's list, was May 3, 1888, cf. Appendix I.

¹¹⁰ Cf. note 31 of this chapter.

¹¹¹ Legge, *The Nestorian Monument* (1888), p. 55.

His [Ricci's] converts were not a few, and among those of high rank was a member of the Han-lin College, called Hsü Kwang-hsî, who afterwards assisted him in translating Euclid into Chinese ...¹¹² I have heard the confessions of many good men when they were being admitted to the membership of some of our stricter churches in this country; but I never heard one more simple in its statements, or more devout in its spirit than that of this Hsü ...¹¹³

Other Jesuit missionaries, not inferior to Ricci, came into the field, men such as Adam Schall and Verbiest ...¹¹⁴

After the description of the decline of the Roman Catholic missions because of the Chinese Rites controversy, Legge further commented on the subject:

... One thing was plain; — that the converts had been sincere, and that no violence was able to eradicate the Christianity that had been planted in China ... It cannot be said that I have spoken with Protestant prejudice of the Roman Catholic missions. I do homage to the ability, perseverance, and devotion of many of

¹¹² Hsü Kwang-hsî (or Xu Guanqi), baptized as Paul, was one of "Three Pillars of the Early Catholic Church". The other two were Li Zhicao and Yang Tingyun. According to Bob Whyte, Xu and Li had worked closely with Ricci in translating outstanding European books on mathematics, geography, hydraulics and astronomy. In 1607, the initial six chapters of Euclid's *Elements of Geometry* was published. Xu went on in later life to produce a series of his own works, including a famous work on agriculture, cf. *Unfinished Encounter*, pp. 67-68.

Xu and Li can be seen as pioneers of co-agents in translation with the Western missionaries.

¹¹³ Legge, op. cit., p. 56.

¹¹⁴ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 57.

the missionaries, and to the wisdom of their methods. They deserved success, and they gained it. If they sought the imperial favour too much, and made doubtful concessions to obtain it, as I said of the Nestorians, what else could they have done in their circumstances?¹¹⁵

Even when he talked about Robert Morrison, to whom he devoted pages of his own "Notes of My Life", he compared Morrison with Ricci with no uncertain words. "Far inferior to Ricci in scholarly training; he was not inferior to him in indomitable perseverance, and cherished equally the high ulterior aim of the missionary."¹¹⁶ Thus Robert Morrison was not ranked superior when compared to a sixteenth century Roman Catholic missionary. Why? Because by 1888, the ideal missionary for Legge must possess the following virtues and scholastic aptitude:

There are many great scholars and skilful organizers in the Protestant camps; some contemplating institutions of a higher educational character than have yet been established. Success to every well-contrived endeavour! Yet their dependence must be on the power of truth; their armour must be that of righteousness; their weapons must be forbearance and sympathy. Let their many-hued hosts move on with a common object, not striving among themselves, and *all ready to acknowledge the elements of good that are to be*

¹¹⁵ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 58.

¹¹⁶ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 60.

*found, not only in confucianism, but also in Taoism and Buddhism.*¹¹⁷

The last sentence prompts the present writer to look at Legge's career in scholarship, translation and evangelization not only in relation to the "Term Question" but from a perspective beyond the controversy.

Beyond the "Term Question"

In the last chapter, the present writer tries to illustrate the translation principle at work with Legge as an example. The "conversion" process never abated during Legge's career as one looks at the "Term Question" in relation to Legge's understanding of scholarship, translation, and evangelization. To a certain extent one can even say that Legge was not only a missionary who advocated "transformation" but one who advocated revision. However, he did not like to revise for the sake of revision itself. He wanted the truth, and in the light of what he thought to be truth, he was more than willing to revise what he has said and written before. In the appendix III, "Romanism and Protestantism and Chinese Evangelization" to her *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, Helen Edith Legge quoted from Legge's own

¹¹⁷ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 65. Emphasis by the present writer.

writing in 1858 in describing Matteo Ricci's mission with the following words:

... It has been said of Ricci by one of the opposite party, that the "kings found in him a man full of complaisance, the pagans, a minister who accommodated himself to their superstitious; the mandarins, a polite courtier, skilled in all the trickery of Courts; and the devil, a faithful servant, who far from destroying, established his reign among the heathen, and even extended it to the Christians ...¹¹⁸

The enterprise of China's evangelization, I say, has now delved upon Protestantism. To be sure, Popery is still in the field, and in much greater force than Protestantism is. But not more surely do we believe that in prophecy China is promised to Christ, than we believe that the doom of Popery is foretold.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, p. 241.

¹¹⁹ Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 242.

Helen Edith Legge does not give the actual source of the quotation. The present writer found the above quotation on Ricci in the sermon *The Land of Sinim* (1859) by Legge on pp. 22-23. But the picture portrayed by H.E. Legge was rather negative. For the sermon, to my mind, presented the picture quite differently:

"Popery is to be met in China, just as here, by the testimony of the truth. We need not fear it. ... But ... let us not refuse our generous appreciation to the self-denial and heroic action which have characterized many of its missionaries; and may we not hope also that many of their converts will be found at the last to swell the multitude of those from the

James Legge, as quoted in *The Nestorian Monument* (1888) above, though still critical of the French Treaty with China in 1858 to enforce toleration of the Christian religion as "unjust" and "unwise",¹²⁰ on the whole had a very high opinion of the Roman Catholic missions in China. Matteo Ricci, in the eyes of Legge, was not inferior to Robert Morrison in the missionary cause. ,
Legge even moved beyond Ricci's line towards Chinese culture by urging missionaries to acknowledge all good elements in Confucianism as well as in Taoism and Buddhism. Legge was not only "converted" into a champion of Confucianism but became more and more sympathetic toward other religions of China.

In "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877) Legge presented the image that classical Confucianism was

land of Sinim'?", cf. *The Land of Sinim* (1859), p. 25.

Samuel Wells Williams, in his *The Middle Kingdom* Vol. II, (1899 edition), pp. 292-293, wrote that Ricci "for skill, perseverance, learning, and that, his name deservedly stands highest among their missionaries. His withholding the Bible from the Chinese, and substitution of image worship, ritualism, and priestly ordinances from the pure truth of the gospel, have been maintained by his successors, for they are essentially features of the church which sent them forth." He also quoted the saying that can be found in H.E. Legge's book on Ricci in p. 293.

¹²⁰ Legge, *The Nestorian Monument* (1888), p. 58.

some sort of "preparatio evangelica" for the Chinese. In the classical Confucian teaching, "man is the creature of Heaven or God", and that man "is the head and crown of all God's lower works", more intelligent than other beings, and especially endowed with a moral nature; "that he consists of a mortal body and anima, and of an intelligent soul or spirit, which are separated at death."¹²¹ On the goodness of human nature, Legge wrote about Mencius' view that "his treating on the subject has been thought by many to conflict with Christianity". Legge remarked:

... I do not think so ... Mencius maintains the goodness of human nature, in the same way as Bishop Butler maintains it in his well-known *Sermons*; — that by an analysis of that nature it is seen that man was formed for goodness, and that, when is not virtuous, he is violating the law of his nature ...¹²²

¹²¹ Legge, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877), p. 7.

¹²² Legge, *ibid.* Legge has discussed Mencius' view on the goodness of human nature in *The Chinese Classics*, vol. II (1862), "Prolegomena", pp. 58ff., with the works of Bishop Joseph Butler (1692-1752), especially his three famous *Sermons Upon Human Nature*.

Bishop Butler of Church of England, was a moral philosopher, a preacher in the royal court, and an influential author who defended reveal religion against the rationalists of his time. He became bishop of Bristol in 1738, and later bishop of Durham in 1750. In 1736 he published *The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution*

Therefore in the contrariety of the actual man to the ideal, it would be for the missionary to supplement Confucianism in this respect.¹²³ Legge then pushed further on that "Confucianism does not teach the immortality of man, but neither does it deny it". In this respect, "we cannot say that it is antagonistic to Christianity. We cannot say so, any more than we can say that the Pentateuch is antagonistic to Christianity. If Moses ... did not communicate the knowledge of a future state, we cannot be surprised that Confucianism is silent on the subject."¹²⁴ It is very clear that Legge argued for the good elements in Confucianism apart from the dominant question about the terms for almost three decades. He further expounded:

... But for any suffering or punishment of the bad after life, Confucianism does not speak ... The word used by missionaries generally for hell is derived, I believe, from a Buddhist source, and I do not think we are sufficiently guarded in the employment of it; for Buddhism is antagonistic to Christianity as Confucianism is not, proceeding from an entirely different view of the system of the universe.¹²⁵

and Course of Nature for which he has been considered by some critics to be one of the foremost British moral philosophers.

¹²³ Legge, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877), p. 7.

¹²⁴ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 8.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

... The teaching of Confucianism on human duty is wonderful and admirable. It is not perfect indeed ... But on the last three of the four things which Confucius delighted to teach - 'letters, ethics, devotion of soul, and truthfulness', his utterances are in harmony with both the Law and the Gospel ...¹²⁶

... that missionaries should endeavour not to exhibit themselves as antagonistic to Confucius and Confucianism. ... I am inclined ... to believe that Confucius ... was raised up by God for the instruction of the Chinese people. That his system of teaching was not complete, is only in harmony with the Divine plan in the communication of truth to mankind.¹²⁷

... our admitting that these men [the sages of China] were specially helped by God that He might keep up some knowledge of Himself, and of the way of duty among the millions of their race ... [as the law contained in the Old Testament] I think that much in *Confucianism* may be made to serve a similar purpose with the Chinese. Let the missionaries therefore show a willing appreciation of what is good in the system; and where he can see defects in the character of the sage himself ... let him lay bare his nakedness with a tender hand ...¹²⁸

In the evaluation of Confucius and Confucianism, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877) stood in between the remarks in the 1861 edition of the *Chinese Classics, Vol. I* and those in the 1893 edition. In 1861,

¹²⁶ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 9. Emphasis by the present writer.

¹²⁷ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 10. Emphasis by the present writer.

¹²⁸ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 11. Emphasis by the present writer.

Legge's comment on Confucius read , *"I am unable to regard him as a great man."* In 1877, he rephrased his words to treat Confucius as someone who was "raised up by God for the instruction of the Chinese people" and urged the missionaries to show a willing appreciation of what is good in Confucianism. In 1893, he moved to a new plane by saying that "the more I have studied his character and opinions, the more highly I have come to regard him. He was a very great man, and his influence has been on the whole a great benefit to the Chinese, while *his teachings suggest important lessons to ourselves who profess to belong to the school of Christ.*"¹²⁹ In 1861 Legge was eager to know more about Confucius and Confucianism but found it hard to treat Confucius as a great man. In 1877, he began to believe, or accept that Confucius was raised up by God for the instruction of the Chinese people and the missionaries in China need to appreciate and respect Confucian teachings. In 1893 Legge saw Confucius as a very great man and that the missionaries from the West should learn something from his teachings. Moreover, at least from 1877 onwards, Legge began to see other religions of China in a somewhat different way. The missionaries' task was to reform and to revolutionize

¹²⁹ Cf. notes 104 and 105 of Chapter Two and notes 127 and 128 of this chapter. Emphasis by the present writer.

them.¹³⁰ The translation principle was applied throughout the years in Legge's understanding of Confucian teachings and later moved on to other religions of China. From the point of harsh criticism of Confucius and his teachings Legge moved to the position that missionaries and his fellow Christians from the West should respect and learn from the Confucian teachings. After 1877, Legge published *The Religions of China* (1880) which touched upon not only Confucianism but also Taoism. Later he translated *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms* (1886). Part of the objects of such study, to Legge, "was to teach myself first, and then others, something of the history and doctrines of Buddhism".¹³¹ The willingness to learn at least something from Taoism and Buddhism was more explicitly shown in another later publication in 1888, *The Nestorian Monument*. Starting from the translation of the Nestorian monument, Legge moved to the review of the history of Christian missions in China and then proceeded to the discussion of his own missionary ideal, that all missionaries should be "ready to acknowledge the elements of good that are to be found, not only in Confucianism, but also in Tãoism and Buddhism."¹³² Therefore the present

¹³⁰ Cf. note 60 of this chapter.

¹³¹ Cf. note 109, "Preface", ix.

¹³² Cf. note 117 of this chapter. Emphasis by the present writer.

writer would like to argue that while one can affirm that the "Term Question" has occupied Legge's mind for several decades, in his later years (especially his Oxford days), Legge's major concern began to shift from the study of classical Confucianism to a broader horizon which included the study of Taoism, Buddhism, and general Chinese history as a whole. His lectures on "Tao Teh King" commenced in 1882,¹³³ after the publication of *The Religions of China* (1880). In *The Religions of China*, Legge had already raised the question that "Does the Tão Teh King recognize the existence of God?"¹³⁴

In the important section "Does the Tão Teh King recognize the existence of God?" Legge argued in the following way:

... The ancient Chinese ... calling the visible sky by the name t'ien, used the same term to express their concept of a Supreme Power, under Whose rule they were. Now, Lâu-tsze [Laozi] does this just in the same way as Confucius. ... We read such expressions as "the correlate of Heaven", "Heaven saves", "governing men and serving Heaven".

But when it is said, as in ch.1, that "Tão (conceived of as) having no name, is the beginning of heaven and earth; and (conceived

¹³³ Two lectures on "Tao Teh King" were addressed on November 1 and 4 in 1882 respectively, cf. Appendix I.

¹³⁴ Legge, *The Religions of China* (1880), pp. 226-230.

of as) having a name is the mother of all things;" or, as in ch. 6, that "the door of the abyss-mother is the root of heaven and earth", does it not seem that Lâo-tsze made his Tâo prior to Heaven? He certainly makes it prior to heaven and earth, which is a phrase denoting the totality of material existences; but he does not make it prior to Heaven, in the usages of that name of which I have just spoken. "Heaven and Earth" seems to be used, we saw, in the Confucian books, as a dualistic name for the one Heaven, but it has not that application in the Tâo Teh King, and because of such predicates of the Tâo as are before us *I do not feel called on to admit that Lâo-tsze did not believe in God.*¹³⁵

Then Legge rejected the idea that chapter four of the *Tâo Teh King* presented the idea that "there is no room for a Supreme God in his [Lâo-tsze's] system".¹³⁶ That chapter reads like this:

4.1. The Tâo is (like) the emptiness of a vessel; and in our employment of it we must be on our guard against all fullness. How deep and unfathomable it is, as if it were the Honoured Ancestor of all things!

2. We should blunt our sharp points, and unravel the complications of things; we should attemper our brightness; and bring ourselves into agreement with the obscurity of others. How pure and still the Tâo is, as if it would ever so continue!

¹³⁵ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 226-227. Legge quoted from chapters 68, 67, and 59 of the *Tâo Teh King* for the expressions of "heaven". Emphasis by the present writer.

¹³⁶ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 227. The idea was quoted from Professor Douglas, *Confucianism and Taoism*, p. 211.

3. I do not know whose son it is. It might appear to have been before God.¹³⁷

The term employed here for God is Tî, the personal name of the conception of Heaven as the ruling Power, - a term whose origin, ... was in the prehistoric time. Now, Lâu-tsze does not say that he does not believe in God. On the contrary, he accepts the fact of His existence. The sentence does not intimate any negation. All that can be argued from it is that our author makes God posterior, and so inferior, to his Tâu. But he does not really do so. He does not say that Tâu was before God, but that it

¹³⁷ Legge, *The Texts of Taoism* (1891), pp. 49-50. Legge has revised his translation of the text quoted in *The Religions of China* (1880), pp. 227-228. Legge probably began his serious study on the texts of Taoism in the late 1870's, especially the *Tâu Teh King*.

"During the last two years I have myself made two versions of the original, and advanced a considerable way with a third. Notwithstanding the succours afforded by Julien and Chalmers, I undertook the labour of translating afresh for myself, transcribing at the same time the original and the happiest portions of Chinese commentary on it, because I have learned by experience that such a process gives one most readily a mastery of the old books of China. Their meaning and spirit soak gradually into the mind. My long dealing with them has not yet enabled me to make them throw open their gates at the first commons. After all my pains with the *Tâu Teh King* I am still waiting for more light on many chapters."

Cf. *The Religions of China* (1880), pp. 215-216. Stanislas Julien published a complete translation of the *Tâu Teh King* in Paris in 1842 and John Chalmers did one in Canton in 1868, cf. *ibid.*, p. 215 and also Legge, *The Text of Taoism* (1891), "Preface", xiii.

might appear to have been so. In no chapter does the nature of Tão as a method or style of action appear more clearly ... it was probably the perception of this quality in the processes of nature that gave rise to the ideas of God, and led to the use of the name heaven as the personal Tî.

Such is the interpretation of this difficult chapter in which, after long musing, my mind has found rest. In harmony with it, I reply in the affirmative to the question whether the *Tão Teh King* recognizes the existence of God.¹³⁸

While affirming that the *Tão Teh King* recognizes the existence of God, Legge pointed out that "there is no inculcation of religion in the book" and that "Lão-tsze's Tãoism is the exhibition of a way or method of living which men should cultivate as the highest and purest development of their nature".¹³⁹ However, Legge did not underrate the significance and the influence of the work:

... Tãoism, as a system of superstitions, is antagonistic to Christianity; but where its professors confine themselves to the study of the *Tão Teh King*, and cultivate the humility and abnegation of self which are there so strongly inculcated, they are more prepared than the Confucian literati to receive the message of the gospel.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Legge, *The Religions of China* (1880), pp. 228-229.

¹³⁹ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 229.

¹⁴⁰ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 296-297. Emphasis by the present writer.

Therefore Legge did not treat Lao-tsze as an atheist or an agnostic,¹⁴¹ and he even saw that Chwang-tsze's (or Zhuang Zi, Kwang-tze) "representation of the Tão approaches our idea of God".¹⁴²

Before the publication of *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms* (1886), Legge's major concern centred around the study of classical Confucianism and then gradually moved towards that of Taoism. However, he showed his interest in the study of Chinese Buddhism while he was still in Hong Kong. In 1878 he began to translate the travels of Fa-hien in English.¹⁴³ After the publication of the translated work in 1886, Legge also lectured on various subjects relating to Taoism, Buddhism and other aspects of ancient Chinese history and culture. In the lecture on "The Purgatories of Buddhism and Taoism", Legge described Buddhism as "one of the great existing religions in the world" whose founder "taught an admirable morality, an astonishing love of charity and almost inconceivable

¹⁴¹ Legge, "The Tão Teh King" (Lecture II), fol. 74, Ms. Eng. misc. d. 1262, lecture notes in the collection found in the Bodleian Library.

¹⁴² Legge, "On Chwang-tze", fol. 51, Ms. Eng. misc. d. 1261 in Bodleian Library.

¹⁴³ Legge, *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms* (1886), "Preface", vii. Legge also lectured on a similar subject on November 4, 1885, "Fa-hien and his Travel in India with the State of Buddhism in our Fifth Century", cf. Appendix I.

exercise of self-denial and self-sacrifice, an extensive amount of self culture; and I may specify also, the practice of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks, which must awaken the admiration of total abstainers in our own and other Christian countries".¹⁴⁴ Though there was no clear evidence in Legge's later publications that he placed Taoism and Buddhism on the same level with classical Confucianism when compared with Christianity, the present writer would like to stress that Legge was gradually moving to the position that these systems of thoughts and values would offer valuable lesson for the West. The deeper Legge dug into the Chinese cultural heritage, the more that he found precious and enlightening things for the West to recognize, to appreciate, to respect and to learn. The translation principle applied here once again as Legge did not stop only at one point but step by step chartered hitherto unknown areas of the Chinese mind. He was willing to listen and to understand the teachings of the sages of China and showed greater interest in lesser figures in Chinese history in his later years. From the lectures listed by his daughter,¹⁴⁵ Legge has definitely

¹⁴⁴ Legge, "The Purgatories of Buddhism and Taoism", fols. 105, 106, Ms. Eng. misc. d. 1260 in Bodleian Library. The lecture was addressed on May 23, 1893.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Appendix I.

moved beyond the "Term Question" and touched on a wide range of subjects concerning China. To a certain extent Legge was steadily becoming a historian as well as a sinologist. Thus the charge by the "Inquirer" that Legge "falsifies history" should be overruled and by countering such a charge Clae Waltham's assessment of Legge should be vindicated.¹⁴⁶ Legge has not been falsifying history in his scholarship, but practising translation in relation to the cause of evangelization. Indeed, he has been *revising and reviving history* through his lifelong labours. The tragedy is that he is remembered as only a great sinologist or as only a devoted missionary; the relation between these two images was not closely examined after his death. His contribution to the understanding of Chinese history in relation to the Christian faith has been almost totally overlooked by missiologists and theologians. Approaching the close of the twentieth century with the hundredth anniversary of Legge's death in sight, it is an appropriate time to renew the study of Legge by receiving the tradition reflected in the approach made by Legge, into the experiences of Chinese Christians, to reinterpret our own

¹⁴⁶ Cf. notes 88 to 98 of Chapter Two.

history, our own cultural heritage, in relation to the cause of evangelization in China.¹⁴⁷

Though one may still argue that Legge's judgement on specific matters might be wrong, Legge set a path for the future generations of missionaries and Chinese Christians to tread on. He has laid the foundation and set up the example, and if the translation principle can be applied here too, any past judgement can be revised in the context of new situations arisen and new knowledge acquired. The present writer would be inclined to believe that Legge would be willing to revise his own standpoint if new light had shed on the subjects that he had discussed. When Legge turned his attention to Chinese history, what he has written really moved the present writer, reviving his interest in one's own national and cultural history.¹⁴⁸ Legge once wrote:

¹⁴⁷ More about this aspect will be discussed in another chapter and in the conclusion.

¹⁴⁸ As mentioned in the foreword, the present writer is brought up in Hong Kong, a British Crown colony, and received a kind of education that place no special emphasis on Chinese history and cultural tradition. The Christian Church in Hong Kong generally also showed little interest in discussing and exploring the significance of Chinese culture and history in relation to the Christian faith. "National distinctives", as mentioned in Andrew F. Walls' article in Chapter Two, have been ignored by most of the Chinese Christians in Hong Kong. However, the issue of 1997 and the June 4 event in 1989 provide stimulations for the arousing of some kind of

... I have not yet forgotten the delight with which I spelled out from a Chinese Historical Romance in 1840, the history of the country from the eighth to the end of the third century before our era, the closing centuries of its feudal state. It then came into my mind, that of in course of time I should come to be a grandfather and have grandsons, *I should write from the history of China "Tales of a Grandfather"* ... as Sir Walter Scott had done for the characters of Scotland in a much later but corresponding era ...¹⁴⁹

What Legge had in mind was to "make the characters of that age in it as familiar as interesting to young minds".¹⁵⁰ Unfortunately, Legge never had the opportunity fully to materialize this grand vision of combining Scottish literary genius with his Chinese scholarship to produce another set of writings that would remain unsurpassed for decades in revealing the Chinese mind in the English language. Anyhow, Legge managed to write articles on a significant figure in Chinese history and lectured on his life and his poems, i.e., Qu Yuan (or

"Chinese Consciousness" among a lot of Chinese Christians in recent years. This issue will be discussed more thoroughly in the conclusion.

¹⁴⁹ Legge, "Two Heroes of Chinese History" (lecture delivered at the City Hall, Hong Kong, March 11, 1873), published in the *China Review* 1:6 (1872-1873), p. 371. Emphasis by the present writer.

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), Scottish novelist, poet, historian, and biographer who is often considered both the inventor and the greatest practitioner of the historical novel.

¹⁵⁰ Legge, *ibid.*

Ch'ü Yuan).¹⁵¹ Qu Yuan, "there is no name better known in China than this"; the festival of the dragon boats on the fifth day of the fifth month in the Chinese lunar calendar commemorating his death as a "patriot" who drowned himself in the Mi Luo river more than two thousand years ago. Legge even compared the boat races in Canton he witnessed some forty years ago with those he saw in Oxford.¹⁵² From the records of Sima Qian,¹⁵³ Legge described Qu as an attendant of king Hwâi of Ch'ü (king Huai of Chu), "a minister possessed of extensive information and with a strong memory, skilful in the maintenance of order, and admirable in the composition of governmental notifications and orders". However another

¹⁵¹ Legge, "The Li Sao Poem and its Author: I. The Author", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (January, 1895), pp. 77-92. "The Li Sao Poem and its Author: II. The Poem", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (July, 1895), pp. 571-599. "The Li Sao Poem and its Author: III. Chinese Text and Translation", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (October, 1895), pp. 839-864. The lectures actually preceded the articles. They were addressed on May 22 and May 29, 1894 respectively, cf. Appendix I.

¹⁵² Legge, "The Li Sao Poem and its Author: I. The Author", p. 79.

¹⁵³ Sima Qian (Ssu-ma Ch'ien or Sze-mâ Ch'ien, c.145-c.85 B.C.), astronomer, calendar expert, and the first great Chinese historian, noted for his authorship of the *Shi-Ji* (*Shih-chi*, "Historical Records"), which is considered to be the most important history of China down to the end of the second century.

high official slandered him to the king which caused the king to keep him at a distance. On his part Qu was indignant that the king listened to these words without discrimination, that slanderers and flatterers were able to obscure the king's intelligence, that the justice of his words was perverted by their injurious and contemptible misrepresentations, while his uprightness and correctness were not acknowledged. He therefore became sorrowful, brooded moodily over his case and composed the poem *Li Sao* (literally "fallen into sorrow", or "beset with sorrow"), "from the feeling of resentment".¹⁵⁴ "The subjects which he was always revolving in his mind were — how the king would be preserved and the kingdom restored to prosperity."¹⁵⁵ In Legge's eye, Qu's death confirmed the feeling of the Chinese people generally that when a minister or higher official has sustained a defeat, or been disgraced by his sovereign, the proper course for him is to end his life by an act of his own to show his loyalty and faithfulness in serving the sovereign and the kingdom.¹⁵⁶ Legge did not regard Qu as a Confucianist as his affinities were more with Taoism than with the doctrines of the Confucian

¹⁵⁴ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁵⁵ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 87.

¹⁵⁶ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 90.

literati. Though Qu was well acquainted with the history of ancient China and even learned about the teachings of Confucius and Mencius, "the home of his mind was in the folk-lore or fairy-lore of the Tâoist system".¹⁵⁷ Paying tribute to Qu by referring him as "our hero",¹⁵⁸ Legge drew some concluding remarks on Qu and his poem Li Sao as follows:

... It is not a great poem, but it possesses considerable interest, and awakens in the mind no small amount of sympathy with its author ... We admire his self-culture, his devoted service, and his inflexible conviction of his own honesty and honour; we pity him as the object of jealousy and envy, slandered, disgraced, and banished ... We rather like the man without admiring his poetry, and are sorry for his adverse fortune and melancholy fate ...¹⁵⁹

A nineteenth century Scottish Protestant missionary ended up at one of the most prominent English universities lecturing on a Chinese poet, who drowned himself over two thousand years ago, and calling that ancient Chinese minister as "our hero". What is the implication of such a legacy? Before we turn to this aspect, we must look at the significance of Legge's

¹⁵⁷ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

¹⁵⁸ Legge, "The Li Sao Poem and its Author: II. The Poem", p. 591.

¹⁵⁹ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 598-599.

Chinese co-agents in his efforts on scholarhip,
translation and evangelization.

CHAPTER FOUR: LEGGE AND HIS CHINESE COLLEAGUES: A STUDY IN TWO WAY TRANSLATION

Legge and his Co-agents of Translation

James Legge's effort was not a solo one. He never worked alone in his own field. Even within a colonial setting, he could still find certain colleagues from the Chinese people around him who in turn became good friends and successful helpers by his side. These Chinese colleagues could be viewed as his genuine partners in that monumental task of translation. Actually such local partners performed some kind of translation in a reciprocal way, i.e., translating ideas from the West to the minds of their fellow countrymen as well as in the other direction. Several significant examples stood out under this category.

Ho Tsun-shin: the Traditional Evangelist

Ho Tsun-shin (or Ho Tsun-sheen, 1817-1871) is probably the most famous of Legge's co-agents within Chinese Christian circles. Better known in Hong Kong as

Ho Fuk-tong,¹ he came from the background of the Chinese Diaspora. Little was known about Ho's early life but according to James Cha, Ho was born in Guangdong and followed his father to Malacca while he was still very young.² Ho's father had been a block-cutter for the press of the Anglo-Chinese College at Malacca thus giving the opportunity for Ho to become a student at the College.³ Ho showed scholastic aptitude in his studies⁴ and received a rather comprehensive education with a much broader curriculum in terms of Western subjects⁵ compared with his

¹ Ho Tsun-shin, in Pinyin, He Jinshan. James Legge, at the request of the headquarters of the London Missionary Society, has written a "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen" in 1872, less than a year after the death of Ho, cf. note of Chapter Three.

² James Shih-Chieh Cha, Chapter Three, p. 10 in *Zhongguo Jidujiao Renwu Xiaochuan* (Concise Biographies of Important Chinese Christians) (Taipei: China Evangelical Seminary Press, 1983). No exact date was given to Ho's first arrival in Malacca in both Cha and Legge's account.

³ Legge, *ibid.*, p.2, mentioned that Ho's father was sent from China to Malacca as a block-cutter and printer for the press of the Mission many years ago by Robert Morrison. When Ho Tsun-sheen was sent to Malacca, he was accepted by John Evans as one of the students of the Anglo-Chinese College.

⁴ Legge, *ibid.*, when Ho was still young, he was left in the native school of his own village but "made great progress in the various branches of Chinese learning". Cf. *ibid.*, p. 3, when reaching Malacca, he was once again to be able to rejoin "in the acquisition of a student of more than usual promise".

⁵ James Shih-Chieh Cha, *ibid.*, p. 11.

fellow countrymen in traditional Chinese schools at that time. Ho also had the opportunity to accompany John Evans' son to Calcutta for advanced study.⁶ In Calcutta, Ho even became both a student and a teacher to the famous English linguist and missionary S.C. Malan (1812-1894)⁷ of Bishop's College.⁸

⁶ Legge, "Reminiscences", p. 18. "Soon after I got to Malacca in 1840 the son of Mr. Evans came back from Calcutta, having a Chinaman with him partly companion, partly servant." That Chinaman was Ho. Cf. "Sketch of the Life of Ho tsun-sheen", p. 3, "His sojourn at Calcutta had been beneficial to him in various respects." Also cf. p. 1, Legge described Ho as "a young Chinese of remarkable intelligence" with whom "I soon found myself on terms of great intimacy".

⁷ Solomon Ceasar Malan, classical lecturer at Bishop's College, Calcutta since 1838. He later returned to England in 1840, was ordained as a priest and received his M.A. at Balliol College, Oxford in 1843. Incidentally, he was the author of the book *Who is God in China, Shin or Shangti?* (London, 1855), which supported the cause of "Shang Ti" in the "Term Question". The book was among the list prepared by Samuel Wells Williams in his article mentioned in note 18 of Chapter Three.

Legge praised Malan as "probably the greatest linguist of England" in his "Reminiscences", p. 18.

⁸ Legge, *ibid.*, wrote that Malan was pleased with Ho, "began to learn Chinese from him and taught him English". The reciprocal relationship between Ho and western missionaries already began at Calcutta. Cf., "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen", p. 3, Legge wrote that Malan had been particularly kind and attentive to Tsun-sheen and that the two learned from each other.

Apparently Legge met Ho when "Tsin-shen"⁹ returned to Malacca from Calcutta soon after Legge's arrival at the mission station there. To Legge, Ho was a treasure. Ho had been baptised before he went to Calcutta¹⁰ along with several Chinese converts.¹¹ According to Legge himself, Ho had a gift for languages and he learned the grammar of Greek and Hebrew very soon.¹² He was also an advanced Chinese student familiar with the classical books. For three years Legge educated him in Western knowledge, especially in history, general and ecclesiastical, and also read with him the Scriptures and various works on theology. Before the end of 1842 Ho could read fluently both the Old and the New Testaments in the original and

⁹ Legge, "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen", p.1, mentioned that he became acquainted with Ho in the Spring of 1840.

¹⁰ Legge, *ibid.*, that the name "Tsun-sheen", meaning "advance in goodness", had been given to Ho when he was baptized in 1838.

¹¹ Carl Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong, Oxford University Press, 1985), "Appendix, A Register Baptized Protestant Chinese (1813-43)", p. 215. Smith noticed that in Malacca, on April 2, twenty-nine Chinese men and women partook of Holy Communion, and between September 1838 and April 1839, nineteen Chinese were baptized at Malacca. Among them was Ho Fuk-tong, alias Ho Tsun-shin (Ho Tsun-sheen), a student of the Anglo-Chinese College.

¹² Legge, "Reminiscences", p. 18. Legge added that Ho's power of explaining a text was surpassingly great.

he even attempted composition in Hebrew with success.¹³ Legge was surprised by Ho's power of explaining a text from the Scriptures.

Ho actually was obliged to return to China in 1843 as the ancient Chinese precept of filial obedience required him to marry the girl that had been betrothed to him as a child.¹⁴ He did not part from Legge but "begged to be retained in the service of the of the mission and employed as a preacher of the Gospel to his countrymen"¹⁵ for the rest of his life! When Legge moved the Malacca mission station to Hong Kong in 1843, Ho accompanied him and served as a great helper in the mission in Hong Kong.

Ho was always seen by Legge as a co-worker in his missionary endeavours. As the Chinese congregation of the Union Church grew, Ho was ordained as the Chinese pastor of the congregation in 1846. He was said to be the first

¹³ Legge, "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen", p. 3. After the death of John Evans in the autumn of 1840, Ho helped Legge in teaching the classes in the Anglo-Chinese College and "in addressing his countrymen on Sunday". Ho also displayed "the elements of that power of fluent and perspicuous exposition for which he afterwards became so remarkable", cf. *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁴ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 4. Legge also commented that Ho would like to travel. "He would see the world. He would intermeddle with all science. But these high-wrought purposed came to an end in 1843."

¹⁵ Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar*, p. 18.

ordained Chinese pastor in Hong Kong. Legge was specially interested in the power of preaching of his co-pastor and he recalled that he had never heard a preacher equal to Ho.¹⁶ As the co-pastors of the Chinese Church, Legge would let Ho take up most of the Chinese preaching while Legge himself would still preach once a week to the Chinese congregation.¹⁷ Though Legge could communicate with the Chinese people around him, he still treated Ho as an indispensable helper to convey the message of Christ. Legge once wrote about Ho in a letter in 1861,

¹⁶ Legge, "Reminiscences", p. 19. Cf. also "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen", p. 6, Legge wrote that Ho "displayed a capacity for preaching and exposition, which I do not think that I had ever heard equalled, which certainly I never head surpassed. Legge even saw that Ho excelled many foremost preachers in Britain, cf. *ibid.*, p. 7. Ho, as a Chinese preacher and evangelist, was in no way inferior to his western colleagues.

¹⁷ Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 76, quoted from a letter by Legge on December 27, 1850. Cf. Legge, "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen", p. 5, Legge recorded that Ho took a large share of the labour in instructing the members of the Union Church and in the general preaching of the gospel.

In a letter to Rev. Arthur Tidman dated January 28, 1850, Legge reported that Ho carried on his Bible Class in the Anglo-Chinese Theological Seminary every morning five days a week. During 1849 Ho had gone through the Epistles from the Corinthians to Titus, and class attendance varied from seven to eight up to twenty-five. In Legge's eyes, Ho's expositions were admirably correct and evangelical. LMS Archives, South China-Incoming Letters, Box 5, Folder No. 1, Jacket C.

"He is indeed a help: through him my ideas and desires are continually passing into multitudes of his countrymen."¹⁸

Ho Fuk-tong would be seen by a large number of Christians as a traditional evangelist. However, one must not overlook the fact that Ho did not just undergo a kind of evangelical "conversion" but also received Western ideas through that process. As a student who learned from both the Chinese and the Western tradition he became a pioneer in the process of reciprocal translation in the nineteenth century.

Ho served the Chinese congregation of the Union Church until his death in 1871.¹⁹ His family remained in

¹⁸ Helen Edith Legge, *ibid.*, p. 21. In Legge's "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen", pp. 6-7 he mentioned that Ho had helped to print the outlines of the sermons in Chinese to enable the congregation to understand better the content of the gospel message. Ho has also devoted him time in preparing a commentary on the New Testament in Chinese, cf. Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 9-11. Cf. also note 37 of Chapter Two.

¹⁹ According to Legge's "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen", p. 16, Ho died on April 3, 1871 in Canton (Guangzhou). Ho had been suffering from a stroke and went to Canton hoping for a rest that might lead to his recovery in health. Legge then wrote as follow:

"... He was certainly a man of very remarkable mental power, 'an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures', a sincerely good Christian man. I close with a sentiment to which I often gave expression while he was alive:- If he was not all the hero that we could wish to see, we have reason to be glad that he was what he was,

Hong Kong and continued to make their presence felt in different sectors of the Colony. Ho's fourth son, Ho Kai (1859-1917), became the second Chinese to receive a Western medical degree. Educated at Queen's College in Hong Kong, Ho Kai was sent to Britain for advanced study and earned degrees in both law and medicine. A recognized leader of the Chinese in Hong Kong, Ho Kai was said to have been the first Chinese in the Colony to wear Western-style clothes. A member of the Legislative Council from 1890 to 1914, Ho Kai was knighted in 1912.²⁰ In addition, he was also a key figure in the development of a medical Chinese elite in Hong Kong. He was a liberal donor to the Alice Memorial Hospital, named in memory of his deceased English wife (Alice Walkden) and operated in close association with the LMS. The hospital was opened in February 1887 and in the same year, in October, a College of Medicine for Chinese was opened within the hospital. Ho Kai was one of the originators of the

and to be thankful to God that we had such a man to labour with us, according to his measure and quality in the service of the gospel." Emphasis by the present writer.

²⁰ Carl Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong*, p. 131. Cf. also Paul A. Cohen, *Between Tradition and Modernity: Wang T'ao and Reform in Late Ch'ing China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 246-247.

scheme.²¹ Among the graduates of the College of Medicine for Chinese, the most famous must be Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), the father of Republican China and also a student of Queen's College for some years. There was a strong Christian influence in the college and hospital and a number of Dr. Sun's classmates were baptized.²² Ho Kai's influence was so great that even the Hong Kong Government relied heavily upon his advice in respect of issues affecting the Chinese community.²³ Ho Kai also turned his attention to political reform in China in 1887 with essays on reform advocating the importance of developing Chinese commerce and the need for basic government changes including the introduction of some form of parliamentary system.²⁴

The eldest daughter of Ho Fuk-tong, Ho Mui-ling, married Ng Choy (alias Wu Ting-fang, 1842-1922),²⁵ Ng Choy followed his family from Singapore to Hong Kong, he became a student of St. Paul's College and was baptized

²¹ Carl Smith, *ibid.*, p. 160. Cf. Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.* In Cohen's account, it is said that Ho Kai taught physiology and medical jurisprudence at the College of Medicine for Chinese.

²² Carl Smith, *ibid.*, p. 161. Paul A. Cohen suggested that Dr. Sun might once have been taught by Ho Kai, cf. *ibid.*, p. 247.

²³ Carl Smith, *ibid.*, p. 160.

²⁴ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 247.

²⁵ Carl Smith, *ibid.*, p. 131.

there.²⁶ In 1874, he went to London to study law²⁷ with the financial assistance of his wife.²⁸ Ng Choy returned to Hong Kong in 1877 and became the first barrister of China. The governor of the Colony appointed him to the post of acting magistrate and in 1880 to membership on the Legislative Council-both first for Chinese in Hong Kong.²⁹ In 1882 he left Hong Kong to join the staff of Li Hung-chang (1823-1902),³⁰ then the Governor-general of the capital province Chihli of China. For fourteen years he tried with little success in pushing Li in the direction of major institutional reform. In 1897 he was appointed as minister to the United States, Spain and Peru. Being recalled to China in 1902, Ng became an active promoter of legal reform. However, when the Qing government

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 131-132. Cf. Paul A. Cohen, p. 248.

²⁷ Carl Smith, *ibid.*, p. 132 and p. 148. Cf. also Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.* After completing his studies at St. Paul's College, Ng was appointed clerk and student interpreter in the Police Court before he went to England.

²⁸ Carl Smith, *ibid.*

²⁹ Carl Smith, *ibid.*, p. 162. The appointment by the governor is said to be "the most significant step in securing Chinese opinion in government decisions" in Hong Kong. One might wonder that would be exactly what Legge wish to see if he was still in Hong Kong.

³⁰ Carl Smith, *ibid.*, p. 132. Cf. Paul A. Cohen, p. 249. Under the patronage of Li Hung-chang, a medical school was opened at Tientsin in 1881. Two of its graduates came to practice in Hong Kong. Both served as staff surgeon at Alice Memorial Hospital, cf. Smith, *ibid.*, p. 161.

refused to consider sweeping changes in Chinese criminal procedures, he resigned his post as Vice-president of the Board of Punishments. By the end of his term as minister to Washington (1907-1909), Ng had become completely disillusioned by the Qing court and he moved to the revolutionary camp³¹ led by Sun Yat-sen, once a student in Hong Kong under the guidance of his brother-in-law Ho Kai. After the 1911 revolution he continued as a close follower of Sun and also held a number of major offices.³² As a reformer, he was described by Paul A. Cohen as "a consistent champion of political liberalism combined with cultural conservatism".³³

From the above examples we can have a glimpse of how contacts with the missionaries and Western ideas influenced the traditional Chinese families, thus leading to initiatives in promoting a certain kind of reform within a larger context of the contemporary Chinese arena. Nevertheless, Ho Fuk-tong himself should still be viewed as a traditional evangelist in translating the gospel message to his fellow countrymen, especially through the media of verbal preaching and teaching. Indeed Ho served as an indigenous co-worker alongside

³¹ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

Legge for many years. Legge always treated Ho as an equal, a trusted friend and colleague.³⁴ Although Ho did not play a significant role in the reform movements in nineteenth-century China personally, his family circle was related to these movements in one way or another. People like Ho Kai and Ng Choy all received Western-style education and had close connections with missionaries in their early stages. Moreover, from the standpoint of an independent Chinese Church, Ho Fuk-tong could be seen as the first pastor of the first self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating congregation among the Chinese people.³⁵

Wang Tao: Advocate of a Reformed and Modernized China

Wang Tao (1828-1897), a pioneer in advocating reform in China since the middle of the nineteenth century, has received much greater attention from modern historians

³⁴ Throughout the "Sketch of the Life of Ho Tsun-sheen", one can get the deep feeling expressed by Legge towards this lifelong friend.

³⁵ Legge always had the vision that the Chinese congregation should be under the charge of a Chinese pastor, and that they would take up all the responsibilities and would then no more rely upon the missionaries. Cf. Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 6 and 14.

Cf. also Carl Smith, p. 183, suggesting that the Chinese congregation under the pastoral care of Ho was perhaps the first three-self congregation from the standpoint of an independent Chinese Church.

than Ho Tsun-shin. Though never directly involved in missionary activities, he had long and frequent contacts with the Western world, especially through his close connections with a host of Protestant missionaries in China at that period. Among the Protestant missionaries, James Legge stood out as the dominant figure in the opening of Wang's horizon and as an intimate friend of this traditional Confucian scholar from the province of Kiangsu.

Wang Tao was quite different from Ho Tsun-shin as he never accepted the role as an evangelist among his fellow Chinese. He first came into contact with Western missionaries in Shanghai in 1848, where he met W.H. Medhurst (1796-1857) of the LMS.³⁶ Later he was invited by Medhurst to work for the mission press in Shanghai and became associated with the circles of "treaty port intellectual" at that time.³⁷ These intellectuals had generally worked under missionaries like William Muirhead (LMS worker, 1822-1900), Alexander Wylie (LMS, 1815-1887) and W.A.P. Martin (American Board, 1827-1916) in the translation of Western works into Chinese.³⁸ Wang himself

³⁶ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁷ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 16ff.

³⁸ *Ibid.* These Chinese intellectuals included Li Shan-lan (1810-1882) and Chiang Tun-fu (Jiang Dunfu, 1808-1867). Li went to Shanghai in 1852 and for the next eight years assisted missionaries of the LMS in

was baptized on August 26, 1854 but is said to have shown apparent ambivalence toward Christianity.³⁹ Though Wang complained incessantly about his work at the LMS press,⁴⁰ he formed a genuine fondness for his employer, Medhurst.⁴¹ Medhurst left Shanghai in the autumn of 1856 and died in

the translation of Western mathematical and scientific works. In 1869 Li became the head of the Department of Mathematics and Astronomy of the T'ung-wen kuan (Tongwenguan, a school established in the early 1860's for the study of Western learning in Peking) while W.A.P. Martin was appointed president of the T'ung-wen kuan in the same year. Chiang, on Wang Tao's recommendation, found employment assisting William Muirhead in the preparation of the latter's *Ta-ying Kuo-chih* (*Da-ying Guo-zhi, History of Great Britain*) in the early 1850's.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 20ff. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 282 notes 37 to 41. However, Lo Hsiang-lin, in his work *The Role of Hong Kong in the Cultural Interchange between East and West* (Tokyo, the Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1963), Chapter 3, "Wang T'ao in Hong Kong and Chinese Culture", p. 45, presented the following picture:

"For 13 years Wang T'ao worked in association with Westerners as a secretary, and besides assisting Dr. W.H. Medhurst in the translation of the Bible, he also took part in active ministry. In his diary, we find ... entries in 1854 and 1855 about attending Sunday services or going to the counties bordering upon Shanghai with Rev. W.H. Medhurst and Rev. Wm. Muirhead and there handing out tracts and books." (Emphasis by the present writer.)

⁴⁰ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

England on January 24, 1857.⁴² When the news of Medhurst's death reached Shanghai, Wang was deeply grieved and confided to a friend that this was one Westerner with whom he had felt truly intimate.⁴³

During Wang's stay in Shanghai, he had the chance to meet one of the prominent Taiping leaders, Hung Jen-kan, in 1854.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, Wang did not join the Taiping movement and remained an advocate of reform rather than a revolutionary. He once wrote a letter in 1862 to another Taiping leader, Li Hsiu-cheng (-1864),⁴⁵ to advise him on

⁴² Alexander Wylie, *Memorials of Protestant Missionaries to the Chinese*, pp. 26-27.

⁴³ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁴⁵ Li Hsiu-cheng (Li Xiucheng), the Chung Wang (Zhong Wang, "King of Loyalty") of the Taiping movement, was captured outside Nanking on July 22 and then executed on August 7, 1864. Franz Michael, in *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. III, "Document 382. The Confession of Li Hsiu-ch'eng", commented that contemporaries, especially westerners in China, as well as later historians, regarded Li as the most important and most sympathetic figure of the late Taiping period. "In their eyes Li Hsiu-ch'eng was the real hero of the Taiping Rebellion - a tragic hero at that, since he served a cause that was hopeless and beyond his power to repair." But Franz Michael added that by a critical reading of the confession by Li and a comparison of it with other documents, especially the confession of Hung Jen-kan, would not justify the view of Li as a heroic personality, let alone as an early prophet of Communist principles. Li was certainly an important figure and brilliant military commander, but from his own confession it becomes quite apparent that Li showed no courage in the face of his enemies, cf.

how to carry on its military campaign in Shanghai and other cities along the Yangtze river.⁴⁶ This letter has been viewed as an extremely important document by modern scholars of the Taiping movement, for it is generally agreed that if the advice in the letter had been followed, the outcome of the movement might have been substantially different.⁴⁷

Wang, being suspected by the Qing officials as the author of the letter mentioned above, left Shanghai with the help of the missionaries.⁴⁸ Eventually he arrived at

Franz Michael, *ibid.*, pp. 1382-1383. The confession of Hung Jen-kan will be dealt with in a later section of this chapter.

The letter was written by one Huang Wan, dated February 2, 1862, and has been generally regarded by historians as Wang Tao's work. Cf. Franz Michael, *ibid.*, pp. 1053-1054, comments on "Document 259. Huang Wan's Letter on the Taiping's Shanghai Campaign".

⁴⁶ Cf. Franz Michael, *ibid.*, the English translation of the whole document covers pp. 1054-1063. Cf. also Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 45ff.

⁴⁷ Though Lo hsiang-lin, *ibid.*, p. 75, described Wang's connection with the Taipings as a minor incident in his life, Wang's suggestion to Li was crucial at that time, especially his concern about foreign intervention if Shanghai was under attack by the Taipings. "Our attitude toward the foreigners should be one of peace rather than war. It is not advisable for us to act rashly, losing foreign aid and inviting frontier troubles." Cf. Franz Michael, *ibid.*, pp. 1052 and 1056.

⁴⁸ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 47. "It did not take the local Shanghai authorities long to arrive at the conclusion that Huang Wan was none other than Wang

Hong Kong on October 11, 1862. He was soon received by Legge and the two became fast friends. He joined Legge while the latter was preparing for the Volume III of the *Chinese Classics*. From then on Wang began to make a considerable contribution to the translation enterprise of Legge. The two were so close that when Legge returned to Scotland in 1867, Wang was invited to visit Legge's homeland. Wang thus got the opportunity to widen his horizons while he set foot on European soil. He was probably the first classically trained Chinese scholar in the modern era to spend a meaningful period of time living in the West.⁴⁹ Under the influence of John Chalmers, another LMS worker in Hong Kong when Wang stayed there, he also became possibly the first Chinese to investigate the problem of accurate determination of the chronology of the Spring and Autumn period in Chinese history with the aid of Western astronomical and mathematical knowledge in Legge's home in Scotland in the late 1860s.⁵⁰ He began his journey back to Hong Kong in January, 1870.

T'ao." Wang was aided by William Muirhead and the son of W.H. Medhurst, W.H. Medhurst Jr., who was then in charge of the British consulate at Shanghai. He left Shanghai on October 4, 1862 on a British steamer.

⁴⁹ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 67.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61. Wang Tao has spent a lot of time in the research into calendar and eclipses of the

Wang played a key role in the transmission of the West's "tao" from the early 1850s as a helper of Medhurst in Shanghai. When later he worked with Legge in Hong Kong, he took an equally important part in the transmission of China's "tao" to the West. It seems to be quite fair that he is called as "a broker between civilizations" by Paul A. Cohen.⁵¹ Such efforts did not end even when Legge returned to Britain permanently. Wang learned from his experience that reform was necessary through introducing changes in educational, economic and political spheres.⁵² He saw the use of newspapers as a powerful agent for the communication between the East and the West and also between the ruling strata and ordinary

Spring and Autumn period. Accurate determination of the chronology of this period had long been a problem for Chinese scholars. Wang, using western knowledge to solve the problem, has resulted in great success. He has written on the subject in three books in manuscript form, *Chun-kiu Shuo-run Qiao-bian* ("An Examination into the first days of the moon, and the intercalary months, during the Ch'un-Ts'ëw period"). Legge has used this work by Wang in preparing the *Chinese Classics*, Vol. V and praised Wang as follow: "His mind was first thoroughly stimulated on the subject by the Rev. Mr. Chalmers. There is certainly no work in Chinese on the Ch'un-Ts'ëw period at all equal to this." *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. V, PART I, "Prolegomena", p. 145.

⁵¹ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 58.

⁵² Cohen, *ibid.*, cf. pp. 154-184, on educational, pp. 185-208, economic, pp. 209-315, political spheres respectively.

people. He treated this agent as a new vehicle for self-realization for his own country.⁵³ On January 1874, the *Tsun Wan Yat Po* ("National Revolution Paper") began as the first successful Chinese daily to be published under native auspices.

Wang visited Japan in 1879 and became acquainted with some well-known Japanese journalists and writers. Wang's books were widely read in Japan and his influence could be felt among a lot of Japanese intellectuals.⁵⁴ Among Wang's Japanese friends were several who were actively involved in Pan-Asianist causes. There was a broad substratum of sentiments which these Japanese Pan-Asianists shared. Chief among such sentiments were (1) an awareness of the special historical and cultural relationship between China and Japan, (2) a strong sympathy for the cause of Chinese reform, and (3) vigorous opposition to Western domination of Asia.⁵⁵ Oka Senjin (1832-1913), a romantic, China-oriented scholar, headed a private academy in Tokyo at which instruction was given in the Confucian classics in the 1880s.⁵⁶ Sone Toshitora (1847-1910) was one of the founders of the Koa

⁵³ Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

⁵⁴ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 80 and pp. 100ff.

⁵⁵ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 102.

⁵⁶ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 100.

Kai (Rise Asia Society), a society founded in 1880 in Tokyo for the promotion of Sino-Japanese cultural interchange. Sone had the reputation of being very pro-Chinese. He is said to have been a regular reader of the Analects and to have referred to himself as a native of Confucius' home province of Shangtung.⁵⁷ Sone Toshitora, Oka Senjin, Wang Tao, and others like them viewed China and Japan as natural allies and wanted the two countries to form a close alliance in order to withstand foreign insults and work for the strengthening of the rest of Asia.⁵⁸

Wang actually became one of China's most vocal advocates of reform after the crushing of the Taiping movement by the Manchu authorities in 1864.⁵⁹ Wang began to propose institutional change in the 1870s. His efforts reflected the developmental and noncyclical side of his own views of history.⁶⁰ He treated Confucius as a would-be reformer and as his ideas anticipated Kang Yu-wei (1858-1927)'s thought, his thinking was potentially revolutionary.⁶¹ Wang wrote for the larger educated

⁵⁷ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 103.

⁵⁸ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵⁹ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 56.

⁶⁰ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 151.

⁶¹ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 152. Cf. p. 235, Cohen saw that Wang was deeply engaged in the process of value orientation. "While others were maintaining that

community, the "literati" of his own country⁶² and he advocated education for the sake of modernization.⁶³ He also saw that equal opportunity for women education should be provided in China.⁶⁴ From what he had experienced through contacts with the West he would argue for political reform for the advancement of the national interest.⁶⁵ He once even said that Hong Kong flourished under British rule because it was well-governed!⁶⁶ Prophetic words indeed! From time to time one can see the sense of common interest and the spirit of national

China must adopt new means to preserve an old faith, Wang T'ao, unobtrusively, may be even unconsciously, suggested that the faith itself had to be altered to ensure the survival of China. Wang's conception of Confucius as a potential reformer was part of this reappraisal. ... Wang came about as near as one could come in modern Chinese history to being that most improbable of hybrids, a Confucian nationalist." See also Paul A. Cohen, "Wang T'ao's and Incipient Chinese Nationalism", *Journal of Asian Studies* 26 (1967), p. 573.

⁶² Cohen, *Between Tradition and Modernity*, p. 157.

⁶³ Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 171ff.

⁶⁴ Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

⁶⁵ Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 209ff.

⁶⁶ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 222. Up to this day, a lot of people, both outside and within the Colony, would agree that the stability and prosperity of Hong Kong could be maintained in a better way under British rule rather than under the Chinese regime, no matter what the governing body in China would be. Unless there would be a significant improvement in the Chinese governing body, not too many people would feel confident about Chinese rule.

solidarity in his work.⁶⁷ There is no doubt that as a nineteenth century advocate of reform, Wang really showed an early expression of a cosmopolitan and open-minded Chinese nationalism.⁶⁸

With his close association with Legge, Wang not only helped Legge in translating the Chinese mind to the West but also involved himself deeply in translating the Western ideas to China in the social, political and cultural arena. The process of reciprocal translation can be seen more apparently in the case of Wang than in that of Ho and he should be treated as a more advanced advocate of reform in different and broader aspects of

⁶⁷ Cohen, *ibid.*, p. 227.

⁶⁸ Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 230ff. Cohen, in "Wang T'ao and Incipient Chinese Nationalism" argues that before the Chinese would view themselves as a nation, they had to acknowledge the existence of something of value in the world that was not Chinese. Not then could they respect themselves merely for their Chineseness, cf. 560. (Emphasis by the present writer.)

Cohen also pointed out missionaries like Medhurst, Muirhead, Edkins, Wylie, Chalmers, Fryer and Young J. Allen made up the scholar-elites of the Protestant missionary body in nineteenth-century. To a man they were interested in the transformation of China along modern lines and some of them were active in trying to expand China's knowledge of the past, Wang Tao himself in a letter dated around 1868 to Sanislas Julien singled out Edkins, Wylie, Chalmers, and Legge as different from the majority of missionaries in being sincere admirers and serious students of Chinese civilization, cf. *ibid.*, p. 561.

the Chinese culture than Ho. However, though scholars like Cohen look at Wang as a potential revolutionary, the real "revolutionary" who stood head and shoulders above his fellow countrymen in the mid-nineteenth century was someone who also had close contact with Legge, the Shield King of the Taiping movement, Hung Jen-kan.

Hung Jen-kan: "Revolutionary" in Christian and Confucian Heritage

Many articles have been written on Hung Jen-kan,⁶⁹ the cousin of the Heavenly King Hung Hsiu-chuan (1814-1864) and a prominent leader of the later stage of the

⁶⁹ Yuan-chung Teng, "The Failure of Hung Jen-k'an's Foreign Policy", *Journal of Asian Studies* 28 (1969), pp. 125-138.

Kwan-wai So and Eugene P. Boardman, "Hung Jen-kan, Taiping Prime Minister, 1859-1864", in Chün-tu Hsüeh (ed.) *Revolutionary Leaders of Modern China* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. 55-70.

Franz Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents, Vol. I*, "PART V: Hung Jen-kan's Attempt at Government Reorganization and Centralization", pp. 134-168.

Yu-wen Jen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1973), Chapter 16, "Ascendancy of Hung Jen-kan (1859-1860)", pp. 351-376.

The above are the major articles in English written by modern historians. Franz Michael's comments on the documents written by Hung himself in *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents, Vol. III* are also important materials on Hung Jen-kan.

"Taiping Revolutionary Movement".⁷⁰ Hung was born on February 18, 1822 in Hua-hsien in Guangdong and belonged to the scholar class like his cousin Hsiu-chuan. While he was still young, he was already interested in the study of history and astronomy.

After Hsiu-chuan's third successive failure in the official examinations in 1837 he probably suffered an emotional collapse. During a delirium it was said that he thought he was in the presence of a venerable old man with a golden beard. The old man complained to Hsiu-chuan that the world was overrun by evil demons, and he gave Hung a sword and seal to eradicate the wicked spirits. Hung also believed himself to have met a middle-aged man

⁷⁰ The movement was commonly known as the Taiping Rebellion. The original title, "Tai-ping Tien-kuo" (or Taiping Tianguo), literally would mean "the heavenly kingdom (Tien-kuo) of great peace (Tai-ping)", and stood for the establishing of a new dynasty, cf. Franz Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. I, p. 42. Jen Yu-wen in his *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement* clearly rejected the idea that the Taiping movement was simply a rebellion, and translated the title as "Heavenly Kingdom of Eternal Peace and Prosperity", cf. pp. 65ff. of Jen's work. Franz Michael also described the movement as "one of the most extraordinary episodes in human history", cf. *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. II, "Preface", ix. John Foster saw it as "the strangest chapter of modern missionary history" in his article "The Christian Origins of the Taiping Rebellion", *The International Review of Missions*, Vol. 40, 1950, p. 160.

who aided and instructed him. After that he returned to his occupation as a village school teacher. In 1843 he took the examination for the fourth and last time, but again he failed. Shortly after this, another cousin of Hsiu-chuan, Li Ching-fang, found on Hsiu-chuan's bookshelves an unusual book entitled *Chuan Shih Liang-yen* ("Good Words for Exhorting the Age"). This book was written by the earliest Chinese Protestant pastor Liang A-fa. Apparently Hung received the book during one of his examinations in Guangzhou and he had glanced over it and soon forgotten about it. When Li brought it to Hung again, Hung re-examined the work and suddenly discovered what he thought would be the explanation for all his visions during his illness in 1837.⁷¹

⁷¹ Besides Theodore Hamberg's account of Hung Hsiu-chuan (Hong Xiuquan)'s "conversion" mentioned in the later part of this chapter, cf. note 73, which was based on information provided by Hung Jen-kan, Hung Jen-kan's own accounts on the Heavenly King was translated and published in Franz Michael's *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. II, "Hung Hsiu-ch'üan's background", pp. 3-7. Hung Jen-kan's essay on his cousin was written probably in 1852 or 1853.

Other contemporary English publications included about the origin of the Taiping movement Thomas T. Meadows, *The Chinese and Their Rebellions* (London, Smith Elder, 1856) and John M. Mackie *Life of Tai-Ping-Wang, Chief of the Chinese Resurrection* (New York: Edwards Dix, 1857, reprinted by the Chinese Materials Centre, Inc., Reprint Series No. 84, San Francisco, 1978).

Hsiu-chuan began to realize that the old man he had spoken with in his visions was God and the middle-aged man was Jesus Christ. He also understood himself as the second son of God and was sent by God to save China. He baptized himself and propagated the new doctrines among his friends and relatives. One of his earliest converts was his cousin, Hung Jen-kan. Hung Jen-kan was baptized by Hsiu-chuan and he began to study the same book that had inspired Hsiu-chuan, Liang A-fat's religious tract.

Hung Jen-kan later went to Guangzhou with Hsiu-chuan in 1847 and the two Hungs met the Baptist American missionary Rev. I.J. Roberts (1802-1871). They studied Christian doctrine under Roberts for some time but then they left Guangzhou one after the other. Jen-kan returned to his teaching post while Hsiu-chuan joined one of his earliest converts, Feng Yun-shan (1822-1852). Feng had already established the God-Worshippers' Society in the

James Legge suggested that it was probably in 1834, on a letter from Liang A-fa in the end of 1834, that during the triennial examination of literary candidates held in Canton (Guangzhou), Hung Hsiu-chuan received the *Chuan-Shih Liang-yen* (*Quanshi Liangyan*) through Liang and his compatriots, cf. *The Missionary Magazine*, October 1853, pp. 622-623, "Origin of the First Impressions regarding Scriptural Truth received by the Leader of the Revolution [Hung Sew-tseuen]" by James Legge. The article can be found in the LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 9.

Guangxi province where Hsiu-chuan and Feng had a preaching tour before.

Not much was heard about Jen-kan in his home village in Guangdong until the Taiping movement broke out in July 1850 in Chin-tien village in Guangxi. The uprising had caused the authorities to exercise strict surveillance and made it impossible for Jen-kan to stay at home as an ordinary village school teacher.⁷² Jen-kan fled to Guangxi

⁷² Hung Jen-kan was captured by the Qing officials after the fall of Nanking on October 9, 1864. "The Confession of Hung Jen-kan" was written around the end of October, 1864, cf. Franz Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. III, pp. 1507-1530. The translation of the document covers pp. 1511ff. Franz Michael's comment on Hung remains important for the study of the character.

Yuan-chung Teng's article, "Rev. Issachar Roberts and the Taiping Rebellion", *Journal of Asian Studies* 23 (1963), pp. 55-67, also throws light on the Christian influence on the two Hungs before the movement broke out in 1850.

The leaders of the God-Worshippers' Society, ("Bai Shangdi Hui" or "Shang-ti Society"), adopted "Shangdi" (or "Shang Ti") for God at the very beginning of their itinerant preaching. Furthermore, Hung Hsiu-chuan issued ten proclamations between October 22, 1860, and June 26, 1861 as the Heavenly King ("Tian Wang" or "T'ien Wang") of the movement. Though Franz Michael has pointed out that these proclamations did show how advanced Hung's religious mania had become, the fifth proclamation should not be overlooked. It was issued on the twenty-sixth day of the first month of the Taiping eleventh year (March 6, 1861). In it Hung proclaims that the kingdom is to be called Shang-ti T'ien-kuo (Shangdi Tianguo, "God's Heavenly Kingdom) instead of T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo, and that all old zeals should be re-engraved. However, this order was disregarded. It

in 1851 but, unable to join Hsiu-chuan, he arrived at Hong Kong in 1852. He met the Basel Missionary Society worker Theodore Hamberg (1819-1854) and Hamberg later wrote *The Visions of Hung-Siu-tshuen and Origin of the Kwang-si Insurrection* based on information obtained from Jen-kan.⁷³ Jen-kan and Hamberg seemed to have been in good relationship since Jen-kan described their friendship years later in the following words:

Pastor Theodore Hamberg of Sweden ... was on friendly terms with me. ... He and his wife have both ascended to heaven, and he is still admired by the people of various nationalities. He was extremely fond of me, the younger brother. His disciples are all Hakkas. ...⁷⁴

may well be that the first five proclamations in manuscript form were never put into circulation, even though they reached the hands of a westerner. Cf. Franz Michael, op. cit., "Document 225. The T'ien Wang's Proclamations to His Followers", pp. 928-946, especially pp. 928, 930, 938-939.

⁷³ Theodore Hamberg, *The Visions of Hung-Siu-tshuen, and Origin of the Kwang-si Insurrection* (Hong Kong: China Mail Office, 1854, reprinted by the Chinese Materials Centre, Inc., Reprint Series No. 24, San Francisco, 1975).

According to Franz Michael, op. cit., pp. 1729-1730, Hamberg had another English publication on the Taipings, *The Chinese Rebel Chief, Hung-siu-tsuen, and the Origin of the Insurrection in China* with an introduction by George Pearse, the Honorary Foreign Secretary to the Chinese Evangelization Society (London: Walton and Maberly, 1855).

⁷⁴ This is a quotation from the *Tze-cheng hsin-pien* (*Zizheng xinpian*) which will be thoroughly discussed later, see note 86 below. The English translation of this quotation can be found in Franz Michael, op.

Jen-kan stayed in Hong Kong until 1854 as he went to Shanghai to try to meet his cousin Hsiu-chuan, then the Heavenly King of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, at Nanjing. He failed to make any progress but managed to stay at Shanghai for a while and even studied astronomy and astronomical calculations in a foreign school. It was the period when he had the chance to meet other foreign missionaries like W.H. Medhurst, William Muirhead and Alexander Wylie.

During the winter of 1854 he went back to Hong Kong for safety reasons and continued his astronomical studies and also "taught foreign missionaries".⁷⁵ Through the Swedish missionary Hamberg, Hung Jen-kan was brought to Legge from then on.⁷⁶ Hung's first employment under the

cit., p. 761. Theodore was one of the first missionaries of the Basel Missionary Society and came to Hong Kong in 1847. He worked with the Hakka and was said to be the first missionary to learn their dialect, cf. Alexander Wylie, op. cit., p. 160.

⁷⁵ Franz Michael, "The Confession of Hung Jen-kan", op. cit., p. 1511.

⁷⁶ Legge, "Reminiscences", p. 12. Legge recalled the event as follow:

"He had read our Scriptures and believed them. He was a Christian. Mr. Hamberg said there were no means of sheltering the man at the German station ... and he had brought him to Hong Kong where he would be safe, and I might find him some employment. After some hesitation, I agree to take charge of him

LMS in Hong Kong was to teach John Chalmers (1825-1899) Chinese. Soon he became a very useful member of the LMS station in Hong Kong as Legge recalled:

He [Jen-kan] soon became very much liked by all the Chinese members of the church, grown very much in knowledge of the Scriptures, the principles of Christianity and was the best helper in all that was good in our community, after my co-pastor Ho-tsin-shen (Ho Tsun-shin) ...⁷⁷

Hung served as an active catchiest, not only in preaching and teaching, but also in visiting the sick and even the prisoners along with Legge in this British colony.⁷⁸ He also served as "an earnest and effective preacher, and did excellent service" in Guangzhou.⁷⁹

From 1855 to 1858 Jen-kan divided his time between church work and intensive scholarly self-cultivation. He received in these years a rather thorough missionary

and find some work to do in connection with our Mission ..."

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Carl Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong*, p. 82.

⁷⁹ Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895*, Vol. II, p. 517. Legge, in his lecture on "The Colony of Hong Kong", told the audience that he himself made a visit to Canton (Guangzhou) in January, 1858, and preached to the people there with Hung, cf. *China Review* 1:3, p. 172.

training and knew a great deal about the world outside China, more than any of the Taiping leaders, including the Heavenly King.⁸⁰ The natural sciences, political administration, practical economics, military science, different aspects of Western technology as well as the modern scientific knowledge of the medical missionaries all received his close attention. Moreover, as Jen Yu-wen has pointed out, his most outstanding intellectual achievement was "his subtle amalgam of the wisdom to be found in the Chinese Classics and the truths contained in the Bible".⁸¹ Jen even suggested that with his unique grasp of both Western and Chinese cultures, he was the most broadly learned scholar in China.⁸² So by the time when Hung Jen-kan left Hong Kong to join the Taiping leaders in Nanjing in 1859, "there was no one better qualified to assume the multifaceted religious, political, cultural, and military responsibilities of chief administration the Heavenly Dynasty".⁸³

⁸⁰ Jen Yu-wen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*, p. 355. Cf. also Franz Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. I, p. 135.

⁸¹ Jen Yu-wen, *ibid.*

⁸² Jen Yu-wen, *ibid.*, pp. 355-356.

⁸³ Jen Yu-wen, *ibid.*, p. 356.

Yuan-chung Teng, "The Failure of Hung Jen-kan's Foreign Policy", p. 125, described Hung as the person among the Taiping leaders who had "the

Legge had initially asked Jen-kan not to join the Taipings. However Hung left Hong Kong while Legge was away in 1859. Even though Legge did not approve Hung's rejoining his cousin's movement, in his own reminiscences he shows the intimacy between them,

Between him and myself there grew a warm friendship and he was the only Chinaman with whom I ever walked with my arm around his neck and his arm around mine ...

He wrote to me frequently, sent me copies of the different publications which he issued in which I recognized some of the sermons I had heard him preach ... Among other things he sent me was a copy of the Ten Commandments and portions of the Sermon on the Mount, which he had written out in large characters, and put these up, on and around the principal gates of Nankin [sic], that all might know the laws of the Heavenly Kingdom.⁸⁴

Furthermore, another modern scholar, Donald Treadgold, would see Hung Jen-kan as the only, and potentially crucial, example among Chinese of someone who really caught the vision of James Legge in syncretizing

longest period of personal contact with missionaries".

Ssu-yü Teng, in *The Taiping Rebellion and the Western Powers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), saw Hung as the most well-informed Chinese about Western knowledge in the 1850's, cf. p. 153.

⁸⁴ Legge, "Reminiscences", pp. 12-13.

Confucian tradition and Christian beliefs and the one who tried to translate the combination into reality.⁸⁵

As a matter of fact, when Hung reached Nanjing he was eager to carry out his twofold mission. First he wanted to correct the distorted Christian beliefs that the Taiping leaders had upheld. Secondly he wished to bring reform within the Taiping governing structure and to build up cordial relationship between the Taipings and the Western powers. Hung Jen-kan was well received by the Heavenly King and was rapidly promoted to the post of Prime Minister and entitled the Shield King, Ganwang. Hung Jen-kan then published one of the most important documents of the Taiping Movement, *Tzu-cheng hsin-pien* ("A New Treatise on Aids to Administration").⁸⁶ Described by another modern Western expert on the Taipings, Franz Michael, as "a man of strong religious faith, of character, and of great political and strategic vision",⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Donald Treadgold, *The West in Russia and China*, Vol. 2, p. 186.

⁸⁶ *Tzu-cheng hsin-pien (Zi-zheng Xin-pian)*, was translated into English by Franz Michael, cf. op. cit., Vol. III. "Document 203. A New Treatise on Aids to Administration", pp. 748-776.

⁸⁷ Franz Michael, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 136. Franz Michael's understanding of Hung's character contrasts greatly with the picture portrayed by Kwan-wai So and Eugene P. Boardman. In the article written by So and Boardman, Hung was depicted as a man of "no strong character" and a person who was not "strong-minded", cf. pp. 58-59 and p. 64.

Hung's whole concept of the state and government that the Taipings were to establish was linked with his ideas on religion. All the reforms that he wanted to introduce were based on his missionary educational background and his view of the West that he had gained in the treaty ports.⁸⁸

Moreover, Hung Jen-kan also influenced the Taipings' attitude toward the classics as he tried to reintroduce traditional elements into Taiping society together with new Western ideas.⁸⁹ Apart from introducing practical details in terms of Western technology and governmental structures, Hung's trend of thought was much more dominated by the traditional Confucian pattern than that of the other Taiping leaders, and he was more candid in acknowledging the value of the traditional in thought and behaviour.⁹⁰ His emphasis on "hsing" ("nature") and "li" ("principle") and on action rather than on the study of books reflected⁹¹ some kind of nineteenth century understanding of "praxis" in relation to the Christian belief. He drew his ideas from Christianity and

⁸⁸ Franz Michael, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 140.

⁸⁹ Vincent Shih, *The Taiping Ideology: Its Sources, Interpretations and Influences* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967), pp. 44 and 110.

⁹⁰ Vincent Shih, *ibid.*, p. 119.

⁹¹ Vincent Shih, *ibid.*, p. 136.

Confucianism with equal freedom and was described by another scholar on Taiping ideology as "a Taiping theorist who tried not only to Christianize Confucianism but to Confucianize Christianity as well".⁹²

Hung Jen-kan also saw that while his mission was to bring Christianity to the Chinese people,⁹³ he also accepted the task of liberating his own people from the Manchus' domination.⁹⁴ To establish a new China under the Heavenly Dynasty, he was concerned with problems of conscience, with laws and their enforcement, with the stress on education and the creation of public opinion.⁹⁵ As Franz Michael suggested, the Taiping was revolutionary in character because its basic ideas came from the West. He also added that the movement itself had signalled the beginning of the end of Confucian China. He also claims that there was no direct link between the Taipings and

⁹² Vincent Shih, *ibid.*, p. 140, cf. also pp. 136-138.

⁹³ Franz Michael, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 195, emphasized that Hung Jen-kan was first and basically concerned with the Taiping religion.

⁹⁴ Vincent Shih, *ibid.*, p. 134.

⁹⁵ Franz Michael, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 146-147, and pp. 195-196. In Hung's *Tzu-cheng hsin-pien*, he stressed "rule by law" as a prerequisite for a stable and healthy government to replace "rule by revelation" under the other Taiping leaders. Cf. Franz Michael, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 749 and pp. 757ff. and also pp. 901-905, "Document 210. A Proclamation on the Enforcement of the Law".

the events of the twentieth century in China.⁹⁶ On the other hand, Jen Yu-wen would argue that Jen-kan's blue print, especially his *A New Treatise on Aids to Administration*, had a unique place in the historical progression to the triumphant nationalist program of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Jen even said that according to many modern Chinese historians it is quite possible that had Hung Jen-kan's program been carried out, China would have been modernized half a century earlier and emerged as a new world power even before Japan.⁹⁷ Unfortunately Hung's program never materialized and with the help of the Western powers, the Qing government finally got the upper hand and crushed the movement brutally. Hung was captured

⁹⁶ Franz Michael, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 199.

⁹⁷ Jen Yu-wen, *The Taiping Revolutionary Movement*, p. 362.

J. S. Gregory, in *Great Britain and the Taipings* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), xii, saw that Hung Jen-kan was "one of the first and most far-sighted of Chinese's modernizers", and that Dr. Sun Yat-sen has looked upon the Taipings as a source of great encouragement and inspiration, cf. xii. Ssu-yü Teng also stated that the Taipings had definite influence on Dr. Sun Yat-sen and other nationalist leaders, cf. *The Taiping Rebellion and the Western Powers*, p. 413. Howard L. Boorman, "Introduction", xv and Chün-tu Hsüeh, "Introduction", p. 3, all pointed out that the Taipings have started the revolutionary process in modern China in Chün-tu Hsüeh (ed.) *Revolutionary Leaders of Modern China*.

as Nanjing fell back to the hands of the Manchus and he was executed on November 23, 1864.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Hung Jen-kan was executed at Nan-ch'ang (Nanchang), now the provincial capital of the Kiangsi (Jiangxi) province. Unlike the other Taiping leaders, Hung spoke with determination even in captivity and did not expect to be pardoned. He did not flatter his enemies. He did not blame fate, but acknowledged the shortcomings of the Taipings. He referred to the example of Wen T'ien-hsiang (Wen Tianxiang, 1236-1282), the minister of the Sung dynasty, who when captured by the Mongols refused to renounce his loyalty to his fallen dynasty and perished rather than renounce his "upright spirit". Cf. Franz Michael, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 1508-1510. In "The Confession of Hung Jen-kan", the Shield King wrote:

... Thus it was that Wen T'ien-hsiang of the Sung dynasty, ... was well aware that he had merely acted according to the duties of a minister, and conscious moreover that it was in vain for man to resist Heaven. Every time I peruse his biography, and the "Ode of the Upright Spirit" composed by him, I am filled with emotion and invariably give way to tears, I feel that I can but imitate Wen, ... and whether I gain or lose, live or die, resign all into the keeping of Heaven, and venture not to speak more about it.

(Cf. Franz Michael, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 1514.)

Hung Jen-kan also mentioned the loyalty of Wen at least in two other occasions. Cf. "Document 205. A Hero's Return to the Truth", p. 810, and "Document 207. Proclamations on the Extermination of Demons", p. 861 and note 2, in Franz Michael, op. cit., Vol. III.

Hung, Wang, Ho, Legge and Modern China

Hung Jen-kan, Wang Tao, Ho Tsun-shin and James Legge all belonged to an era that was particularly crucial in the reciprocal relationship between China and the West. Hung, Wang, and Ho all had contributed to help Legge in one way or another to translate the best of the West to the Chinese mind while at the same time assisted Legge or other Protestant missionaries in understanding the Chinese tradition. As Legge had "combined a high level of intellectual achievement with deep respect ... for the Chinese tradition",⁹⁹ Hung and Wang built up a vision of a new China that could be based on both Chinese and Western cultural heritage. One must not overlook the similarities between Hung, Wang and Ho.

Whereas Franz Michael declares that the Taipings signalled the beginning of the end of Confucian China,¹⁰⁰ it was Hung who expressly stated that the Confucian classics in its revised form issued by the Taipings should be a part of the educational material for the candidates, to be used together with the Bible and the religious texts of the Taipings themselves. Hung always

⁹⁹ Donald Treadgold, *The West in Russia and China*, Vol. 2, p. 180.

¹⁰⁰ Franz Michael, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 199.

quoted from the Chinese classics and he recognized the sages as great men but thought it incorrect to worship them.¹⁰¹ In terms of the translation principle, Hung was obviously "converted" while he was willing to "revise" his views on the Confucian tradition as he tried to affirm the best part of it but not to absolutize it.

Wang did not show that kind of religious fervor shown by Hung but he maintained a close relationship with Legge even in his later years. This could be shown clearly in their correspondences while Legge stayed in Oxford from 1876 onwards.¹⁰² Wang, like Hung, also tried his best to introduce Western technology and ideas to his fellow countrymen. The two both saw the importance of the public press and the need for a well-founded general education.¹⁰³ Not totally different from Hung, Wang was also one of the first to warn that the strength of the West lay not merely in its superior military technology

¹⁰¹ Franz Michael, *ibid.*, p. 149. Cf. Franz Michael, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 799-831, "Document 205. A Hero's Return to the Truth".

¹⁰² A few extant letters which passed between Wang and Legge show that they retained mutual respect and concern for one another. These letters are being kept in the Library of the Oriental Studies Institute in Oxford.

¹⁰³ Cf. Paul A. Cohen, *Between Tradition and Modernity*, pp. 79-80 and pp. 170ff., and Franz Michael, *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 147 and 196, and Vol. III, pp. 754 and 757.

but also in its democratic political system which encouraged its superior technology to develop. Wang also did not treat Western institutions as something foreign to China but felt that democratic and scientific ideas were implicit in the Confucian Classics, which he maintained the Chinese had misinterpreted in recent centuries.¹⁰⁴ Apparently Wang had undergone some kind of "conversion" and tried to reinterpret the meaning of his own cultural tradition in the light of new ideas he picked up from his own experience. It would not be an exaggeration to state that both Hung and Wang influenced many prominent reformers and revolutionaries of the later generation in China, especially Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who himself was also a baptized Christian.

One might add that though James Legge never supported the Taipings wholeheartedly, he was one of the prominent missionaries in China who advocated the policy of strict neutrality by the Western powers in dealing with the movement. He remained open to the outcome of the uprising and even protested against the Anglo-French intervention to suppressing the Taipings.¹⁰⁵ While Wang

¹⁰⁴ Paul A. Cohen, *ibid.*, pp. 152 and 136ff.

¹⁰⁵ The major document on this subject certainly is the letter from Legge to Rev. Arthur Tidman of the LMS dated July 1862 in the LMS Archives, South China-Incoming Letters, Box 6, Folder 3, Jacket D. The letter, as the wish of Legge, was published in the

Missionary Magazine (October, 1862), pp. 698-704. The published part can be found in the LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 9. The two main themes of the letter were: (i) no just cause for British authorities against the Taipings (cf. pp. 700-701); (ii) neutrality the only safe and righteous course for our government (cf. pp. 703-704). Legge wrote that the Taipings "ought to have been respected by us as belligerents" (cf. p. 701). He also protested against the putting down of the Taipings by the British government on behalf of the Manchu government on two grounds. First, the ground of its cruelty in wiping out the Taipings and secondly, the utter inefficiency of the Manchu government (cf. p. 702).

"There was one fair course for us to pursue - a real *impartial neutrality* ... Let the severity of our dealings with the Tae-pings be tempered with mercy, it should not be ours to co-operate in their extermination ... But let not us call those rebels whom it calls rebels. Let not us lend our armies and fleets to do for it what it cannot do for itself. If we only did what was right, China would, by-and-by, in God's providence, come to a better state than it is in at present. Whatever betide a nation is no more justifiable than an individual, in doing evil that good may come." (Cf. p. 703, emphasis by the present writer.)

In another earlier letter from Legge to Tidman, dated July 25, 1860, Legge talked about the two principal objects of Hung Jen-kan's mission to Nanking, "... the first was the correction of religious errors; and second, to commend a line of policy conciliatory to foreigners, and of a character to secure, if not their co-operation in the objects of the rebellion, at least their sympathy. He ought to have the earnest prayer of many." (Emphasis by the present writer.) The letter is in the LMS Archives, South China-Incoming Letters, Box 6, Folder 2, Jacket B. The content of the letter was partly reproduced in the *Missionary Magazine* (October, 1860) in an article entitled

was also sympathetic to the Taipings, he and Hung were both champions of a friendly policy towards the Western powers by the Taipings and the two can be treated as bridge-builders between the West and the reformers in mid-nineteenth century China. Thus Legge, Hung, and Wang were sharing a somewhat common expectation towards the consequences of the movement. Donald Treadgold even claims that Legge's more sophisticated and gentler touch towards the entire Chinese tradition is reflected in Hung's attempt to broaden and deepen the Taipings' doctrines to appeal to the Confucian scholars¹⁰⁶ and that Legge's influence can be discerned in Hung's effort to provide some intellectual and political sophistication to the Taiping leadership.¹⁰⁷ Franz Michael indicates that Hung's continued faith in the power of prayer and in the religious basis as the foundation of the whole movement was inevitable. Had Hung succeeded in carrying out his programmes he would have been the leader of what might have become a truly Christian movement.¹⁰⁸ While Wang

"Mission of Hung Jin to Tae-Ping-Wang, Chief of the Chinese Insurgents at Nanking", pp. 757-758. This article can be found in the same box of the LMS archives mentioned above.

¹⁰⁶ Donald Treadgold, *The West in Russia and China*, Vol. 2, p. 166.

¹⁰⁷ Donald Treadgold, *ibid.*, p. 180.

¹⁰⁸ Franz Michael, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 140. Michael added that Hung's whole concept of the state and

later tried to disconnect his public association with Christianity,¹⁰⁹ Hung can be said to have died like a martyr as he threw his whole lot in the liberation of his fellow countrymen from different modes of bondage. Years after Hung's execution by the Qing officials Legge still characterized him as "a man who has won my affection and esteem as few of his countrymen have done".¹¹⁰ One might just wonder whether Hung was more than a true disciple of Legge and Legge's concept about the "revolutionary" character of Christianity¹¹¹ was thoroughly actualized by the Shield King of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Ho Tsun-shin, some years older than Hung and Wang, also received a Western style education and remained as a faithful pastor among his Chinese congregation. He seems

government that the Taipings were to establish was linked with his ideas on religion.

¹⁰⁹ Paul A. Cohen, *Between Tradition and Modernity*, pp. 20-21.

¹¹⁰ Legge, "The Colony of Hong Kong" (1872), p. 172, Legge recalled that Hung was "the most genial and versatile Chinese I have ever known, and of whom I can never think but with esteem and regret. Had he taken my advice in Hong Kong as a preacher, and might have been living with his head on him to the present day." The quotation in the thesis paper is cited from Carl Smith *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong*, p. 82, based on a letter that the present writer failed to locate in the LMS Archives.

¹¹¹ Legge, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877), p. 12.

to have taken up the role as a traditional evangelist and thus ended up as the most well-known figure among the three within Chinese Christian circles in Hong Kong up to this day. As Legge's "right-hand man"¹¹² Ho of course had his influence among the Chinese Christians, but his mission was generally limited to the religious sphere in its narrower sense. Even so, Ho's other family members were also very active in bridging the West and the East in different sectors, such as Ho Kai and Ng Choy mentioned above. The exposure to Western ideas and religious tradition still helped the younger generation in Ho's family to respond to the challenges and

¹¹² Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895*, Vol. II, p. 456.

Ho Tsun-sheen once wrote:

"... From the day when I believed the gospel ... until now, I love Jesus as my personal saviour, ... I wish to serve Christ with all my strength, to propagate his gospel to my own people, to preach the inexhaustible riches of Christ, and the saviour of his religion in whatsoever place God will set me, and feeling that, according to the Power of God, if I shall be able to convert but one of my fellow-creature to Christ, it will be better than all the riches of the world ..." (Emphasis by the present writer.)

This is quoted from a letter dated January 16, 1841, written by Ho to Rev. Arthur Tidman to request to be employed as an evangelist by the LMS. The letter can be found in the LMS Archives, Ultra-Ganges, China-Malacca (Incoming Letters), Box 3, Folder 5, Jacket A.

opportunities in a more sophisticated manner. They contributed considerably in promoting reform ideas in a public manner which paved the way for a more modernized China. One cannot help raising the question: are people like Ho Kai and Ng Choy actually also disciples of the same line following Legge, Wang or Hung?

Even if we alienate Ho Tsun-shin and his family members from the reforming lines of Hung and Wang and treat Ho just as a traditional evangelist with no explicit social involvement, we cannot deny that Ho still had played his part in helping Legge to translate the gospel message to the Chinese mind, and he also helped Legge and other foreign Protestant missionaries to understand the Chinese mind.¹¹³ One may argue that in the process of "evangelization", Ho did not go deep enough in the search for a "genuine human liberation"¹¹⁴ advocated

¹¹³ Cf. the most recent study on Ho, Lauren Pfister, "Reconfirming the Way: Perspectives from the Writings of Rev. Ho Tsun-sheen", *Ching Feng* 36:4 (December, 1993), pp. 218-259. Pfister uses the concept of "Transculturation" to illustrate the fundamental role of the interpersonal dynamics between missionaries and converts, and to recognize the cultural, political and religious contexts which constrain or liberate the domain of transformation available to both.

¹¹⁴ Numerous books and articles have been written in relation to the themes of "evangelization" and "liberation" since the late 1960's. Theologians from Latin America, probably following the insight of Gustavo Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation*

by present day theologians who tried to reflect upon the whole idea of "Christian mission" from a more comprehensive perspective. Before we evaluate Legge's contribution in the missionary enterprise a few more words can be said in relation to the Taiping movement and other similar movements that did try to liberate the old China from both the historical and theological perspectives.

An authentic, just, popular movement may be crushed, but it preserves its weight, it keeps its value, not only beyond this historical moment, but just plain beyond history - and independently of whether it's resurrected in history or not.¹¹⁵

(English translation first published in 1973), and later on theologians from other continents, have contributed a lot not only in the discussion but also partook in the actual "praxis" of their theology.

Clodovis Boff, in *Salvation and Liberation* (written by him and his brother Leonardo Boff; Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1984), reflected on "genuine human liberation" in the following terms; liberation of the whole person and every person" (cf. p. 110), Leonardo Boff put it in a similar way as the promotion and advancement of the whole human being and all human beings (cf. p. 4).

The reflection on "liberation" from a missiological perspective will be dealt with in another chapter.

¹¹⁵ Clodovis Boff, *Salvation and Liberation*, p. 89. He then added:

"The Paris Commune was resurrected by history, and keeps being resurrected by history. But how many movements have there been in history, inspired by justice, that

Perhaps the above words of Clodovis Boff will someday be echoed in the minds of millions and millions of Chinese who are still hungry for a genuinely liberated China. If we want to understand mission more deeply, we cannot separate the idea of mission from the understanding of our own history.

have been buried forever, erased from human memory!"

Reading these words, the present writer would immediately think of the June 4 event in 1989 and the massacre of the Jesuits and their lay sister colleagues in El Salvador on November 16 of the same year.

CHAPTER FIVE: MISSIOLOGICAL RE-INTERPRETATION AND RE-EVALUATION OF LEGGE'S CAREER

Mission and the Revision, Reinterpretation and Revival of History

James Legge became a missionary to the East in 1839, and he got involved in the difficult task of translating the gospel message in Chinese terms. This meant not only literal translation of the Scriptures into the Chinese language, but in the attempt to reach the Chinese mind by first understanding the Chinese. He began his study of Chinese language, customs, history, philosophy, and religions in Malacca and was gradually absorbed into the Chinese worldview while remaining conscious of his role as a missionary. By and by Legge's commitment in translating the *Chinese Classics* "converted" his understanding of the Chinese cultural heritage. He revised his comments on Confucius and modified his viewpoint on Chinese culture. Even when he left his mission field he still worked on opening the Chinese mind to the West and partly served as a missionary in that cause. The missionary from the West was "transformed" into a missionary for the East. Chinese history, the heroes recorded in it, became part of Legge's major concern. To a certain extent, Legge's efforts in translation, whether translation of the Scriptures into

Chinese or translation of the *Chinese Classics* into English, resulted in his own "conversion" and "transformation", and ended up as a kind of "mission in reverse".¹ Otto Maduro, in his discussion that leads to the concept of "mission in reverse", reminds all personnel involved in mission that "mission must be profoundly humble and respectful, open and vulnerable, as well as characterized by patient understanding", and "humility requires an acknowledgement and respect for the way of others".² Maduro adds that to do "mission in history - without forgetting it or abstracting oneself from it, without believing oneself above it - requires attentiveness, patient learning, and a willingness to listen".³ "Few methods are more liberating than asking the oppressed about their experience, memory, and vision of their own history."⁴ Perhaps that would be the reason why

¹ "Mission in reverse", a term used by Otto Maduro in his article, "Notes for a South-North Dialogue in Mission from a Latin-American Perspective", *Missiology* 15:2 (April, 1987), p. 74. "Mission in reverse", in Otto Maduro's words, would mean the missionaries have to go more to learn, to receive rather than to give, to become evangelized, to purify themselves, to seek fulfilment rather than to save others. It would also mean humble service born of a recognition of their own shortcomings and vulnerability instead of going to remedy the deficient values' of other people.

² Otto Maduro, *ibid.*, p. 64.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

reflecting on the past history of Christian missions in China, Legge suddenly moved to the words quoted in the last chapter of *The Religions of China*. "We must blame ourselves ..."⁵ The Western nations must not be seen as superior to the East by the missionaries themselves or by the people to whom the gospel message has to be translated in concrete deeds rather than hollow words.

Among the contemporary outstanding missionary figures of James Legge's time, the present writer would single one out to compare with Legge, David Livingstone (1813-1873). There are striking similarities between the two. Both were nineteenth-century Scottish missionaries working for the London Missionary Society within approximately the same period. Both came from a Scottish congregational background and Livingstone was only two years older than Legge. Both devoted their whole lifetime in opening up in an extraordinary style other parts of the world to the West but with a clear sense of serving the missionary cause. Ironically, David Livingstone even had a desire to go to China to preach the gospel there. Robert Troup of the Kirk of Huntly once wrote about Legge like this:

⁵ Cf. note 113 of Chapter Two, from *The Religions of China* (1880), p. 310.

... His purpose was to make the Far East to some extent understood by the West ... It was not unlike that which Dr. Livingstone did, in a different line, for Africa. Dr. Livingstone, not content with the work of a small station ... looked far ahead, and resolved to do what he could for the whole continent, plunged as a Missionary explorer and pioneer into the unknown regions of Central Africa, and persevered until he laid down his life ... Dr. Legge, in like manner, looking beyond his comparatively narrow sphere in Hong-Kong, resolved to open up to the Western nations the language, literature, systems of morals, philosophy, and poetry of the great empire of China, ... plunged into ... the unknown regions of the ancient Chinese classics, in order to translate and interpret them. He persevered ... and now Chinese missionaries, merchant, and scholars, all acknowledge the success of his unwearied perseverance, and the great value of his work.⁶

Moreover, there are several points which even Troup may not have noticed. Legge's contribution to the "mission in reverse" should also be estimated by the spread of the English language in the nineteenth century. With the rapid expansion of the British Empire and her widespread influence in different parts of the world, English gradually became an international language. The translation of the *Chinese Classics* and other texts of ancient Chinese wisdom into English thus would help not only the public in Britain but also other groups of

⁶ Robert Troup, "Dr. James Legge", *The Scottish Congregationalist* (January, 1898), p. 18; cf. Robert Troup, *The Missionary Kirk of Huntly*, p. 171. emphasis by the present writer.

English-speaking people all over the globe to know more about China. The "bible" of the Chinese, the *Chinese Classics*, then could become known by people of different cultures and different religions more extensively. Having said that, Legge's achievement suffered a major setback which was also related to the historic dramas in the nineteenth century, the rapid decline of the Chinese Empire.⁷ While the English language became the cultural symbol of Anglo-Saxon domination of the modern world, the English version of the *Chinese Classics* failed to impress the West because of a perverted image of China. The efforts of Legge were thwarted by a kind of Eurocentric mentality and the overall feeling of superiority held by most of the Westerners. While the *Classics* remain as "the Bible of China",⁸ people of the West fail to recognize and respect the values of such ancient wisdom. Legge's effort

⁷ Such a view has been partly expressed in Liu Cunjen's article in 1991, cf. note 226 of Chapter Two, especially p. 86.

⁸ Carsun Chang, *The Development of Neo-Confucian Thought*, Vol. I, (New York, Bookman Associates, 1957), p. 16.

Xie Dongmin, a Taiwanese high official, once wrote that "if the Christians can give bibles freely for the propagation of the Christian faith, there is no reason that we Chinese cannot give our own Bible, the *Confucian Analects*, freely to our own people." Cf. the back page of *Manhua Kongzi* ("Confucius in Cartoon"), a modern popular version in Chinese of the *Confucian Analects* with cartoons, drawn by Cai Zhizhong, published in Hong Kong in 1987.

to revive the Chinese cultural heritage just could not fully materialize under such circumstances. The modern history of China for a while, seems to have witnessed the turning away of the Chinese people's mind from Confucianism, with the apparent success of the advance of Marxism.⁹ Legge's work, looking from the surface, may seem like fighting for a lost cause. The argument runs simply like this: China in the nineteenth century was declining rapidly, the way for her salvation was not her own "Bible" but the Bible of the Westerners or the modern technology and military power from these nations. The debate on the "Term Question" would not help China at all, and the understanding of the Chinese cultural heritage could not solve the immediate problems facing China. To a certain extent, a "reformed" or a "modernized" China needed no Chinese Bible of her own. The contribution of Legge would be limited to the benefit of the purely academic world of sinological studies. He was just one of the missionaries who happened to be interested in China. But is it the end of Legge's legacy? First let us return to look at his fellow Scottish worker, David Livingstone, from another perspective.

David Livingstone is still recognized and respected by people all round the world as one of the most famous

⁹ This topic will be dealt with in another chapter.

Scottish missionaries in the nineteenth century. One thing again in common between Livingstone and Legge which is overlooked by Robert Troup is that they both gave up their official status as "missionary" without ever relinquishing their "missionary work" by bridging the "unknown regions" in Africa (geographically) or in China (culturally) to the West. Moreover, while Livingstone represented the idea of 'Christianity, Commerce and Civilization', he also saw his work in the context of a providential plan in which gospel-preaching, the increase of knowledge and the relief of suffering marched together.¹⁰ Apart from that, if Livingstone is a herald of imperialism in many people's eyes, "he is also more importantly and permanently a herald of African independence", and "a pioneer of modern independent Africa". In other words:

... His life and writings show a respect for Africans and African personality unusual at that time, and his confidence never wavered in African capacities and in the common humanity of African and European. His missionary principles gave the primacy to Africans in the work of evangelizing Africa. His later career was dominated by the desire to root alien oppression out of Africa. There is a real truth behind the title of one of the popular

¹⁰ Andrew F. Walls, "David Livingstone" in *A Lion Handbook: the History of Christianity*, p. 563-564.

biographies - *Livingstone the Liberator* - by J. I. Macnair, published in 1940.¹¹

David Livingstone was remembered. The memory of James Legge was obliterated somewhat like John Philip, the predecessor of Livingstone in South Africa, though kept in mind by students of Chinese studies as a sinologist or a great translator. His place in the history of Christian missions in China has not been fully vindicated after his death. Even his biography by his daughter, entitled *Missionary and Scholar*, does not present a picture clear and subtle enough to alter the prevailing trend that obscured his brilliance in his days. To rehabilitate the fame of James Legge, one, ironically, must go through the translation process, the "conversion" or the "revision" experience. One has to

¹¹ Andrew F. Walls, "The Legacy of David Livingstone", *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, July, 1987, p. 128.

Cf. also Andrew C. Ross *John Philip (1775-1851): Missions, Race and Politics in South Africa* (Aberdeen, Aberdeen University Press, 1986), pp. 9 and 227. In this study of an outstanding missionary who was "virtually unknown in today Britain", but in fact a leader in South Africa of a world-wide movement among evangelicals committed to the achievement of racial and social justice, Livingstone was portrayed as a potential successor of this brilliant character, John Philip. The revival of the study of this forgotten figure by Andrew C. Ross has also stimulated the present writer to begin this search into one's own past history to re-examine the contribution by yet another Scottish LMS missionary who happened to be in Hong Kong and China for his missionary career.

revise history in the light of a deeper and more sympathetic understanding of one's own cultural past. One has to review the entire history of Christian missions in China in relation to the general history of the Chinese people. As a matter of fact, James Legge has already set up examples for the modern Chinese Christians of "revisionist" historical writing. In his sermon *The Land of Sinim* (1859) and his later publication *The Nestorian Monument* (1888) he recapitulated the history of Christian missions in China. We have already come across his discussion and assessment of the Roman Catholic Missions under the celebrated leadership of Matteo Ricci. Let us now turn to another earlier period which again needs further revision from time to time, the period of the Nestorian missions dating back to the seventh century during the Tang dynasty in China.

The Nestorians, treated by the decision of the Ecumenical Councils as "heretics", reached the capital of the Chinese Empire when the Emperor Tai Zong reigned. In *The Land of Sinim* (1859), Legge recorded that the Nestorians had been in China for many centuries. Then he added the following words, "and must we not believe that many, very many, were saved by their instrumentality?" "We have learned now that Nestorianism was not the heresy

which the churches of Africa and Rome branded it as being. *Nestorians held the truth, and proclaimed it to the Chinese ...*"¹² Legge was willing to give a positive view on the Nestorian mission in China at that time. In 1888, Legge published the English translation of the content of the Nestorian monument and lectured on it in relation to the general scene of Christian missions in China.¹³ In the preface of the publication, he wrote:

... I made a fresh start of the inscription, in the course of which it occurred to me that there were some things to be said on it which had not been said already, — things not unimportant for the general public, and specially important for parties interested, like myself, in the prosecution and conduct of Missions in China ...¹⁴

In analysing the failure of the Nestorian mission in China, Legge gave the following account:

For one thing, the greatest successes of the *Nestorians* were won among people less advanced in civilization than the Chinese were. ... *The scholars of Confucianism* had received a higher intellectual training than those who came to teach them, *the leaders of Tãoism*, versed in the Confucian classics, were strong also in the subtleties and ingenious reasonings

¹² Legge, *The Land of Sinim* (1859), p. 19.

¹³ Cf. not 109 of this chapter, the full title of the publication in 1888 clearly reflected the content inside.

¹⁴ Legge, *The Nestorian Monument* (1888), "Preface", iii.

of their own peculiar system; the *Buddhists* looked at the course of events and the facts of human experience from a standpoint new and strange, and called men to a style of life requiring great self-discipline and self-denial, and not undeserving to be called the noble path. Only among the Confucianists was there a recognition of God ... and even among them that recognition was not so vivid and powerful as it had been in the earlier ages of the nation's history. The Nestorians were at a disadvantage in attempting to take possession of such a field with their own theological subtleties ...¹⁵

... the Nestorian work in China was directed more to propitiate and conciliate the emperors as the Powers that were, than to enlighten and convert the people ... I do not blame Olopun [or Alopen] and his friends for paying court to the rulers of the country and obtaining their sanction to their residence in it. In no other way could they have found admission to it and obtained a foothold. And in the same way Christianity was introduced into our own and other countries ... Nor do I say that missionaries did not take advantage of the imperial favour to work out from their monasteries among the people. They must have done so. How else could they be supported? ... The monument commemorates in one paragraph the liberality in giving to the monasteries of I-sze, ... having raised himself to eminent employments in the state by his talents, he laid nothing up for himself, but imparted all that he received to the strengthening of the mission, and to helping the necessitous. 'He fed the hungry, clothed the naked, healed the sick, and buried the dead.' But this is a solitary instance in the Inscription of the operation of the Christian truth believed and obeyed. We cannot but come to the conclusion that the Nestorian teachers thought it their

¹⁵ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 52-53. Emphasis by the present writer.

better way to work downwards from the apex of society rather than to work upwards from the foundations ...¹⁶

... We cannot but deplore the absence from the Inscription of all mention of some of the most important and even fundamental truths of the Christian system. ... There is little in it particularly ritualistic, but *there is nothing at all evangelical* ... Talking once about Nestorianism in China with one of the most zealous living missionaries, I asked him to what he attributed its failure. His reply was, 'How could it succeed? There was no Gospel in it. How do you account for the failure?' I replied that *I attributed its failure to its leaders addressing themselves to the emperors and men in power, and placing their reliance so much on them.* The two things, no doubt, operated together, and hence it was that the movement which for a time promised so much passed away as rapidly as it rose.¹⁷

In reassessing the work of the Nestorian missions, Legge is working with the idea that during the Tang dynasty, Chinese civilization was at its peak; Confucian scholars, leaders of Taoism and even the Buddhists all showed certain qualities that could be learned by the Nestorian monks. Though criticising the Nestorian monks for relying too much on the ruling powers, Legge admitted that Christianity was introduced to his own and other

¹⁶ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 53-54. The paragraph on the Nestorian monk I-sze and the English translation of it can be found in the same book, pp. 20-25. Emphasis by the present writer.

¹⁷ Legge, *ibid.*, pp. 54-55. Emphasis by the present writer.

countries in a similar way. While pointing out that "there is nothing at all evangelical" that can be found in the Inscription of the monument, Legge again noticed that there was at least a solitary instance of the operation of the Christian truth believed and obeyed, that the monk I-sze fed the hungry, clothed the naked, healed the sick, and buried the dead. If what I-sze had done had been the general practice of the whole Nestorian enterprise, would the eventual outcome of their mission in China have been fundamentally different? Legge tried to understand the actual situation that the Nestorians had been in and realized the difficulties they were then facing. The Nestorians were not heretics but they failed to live out and translate the gospel message in concrete deeds. Legge did not touch on the "Term Question", but it is possible that he had the idea of "Shang Ti" as God of the oppressed in mind when he criticised the Nestorians for propitiating and conciliating the emperors of China as "the Powers that be". The questions in his mind would follow were most probably these: who were the Powers now? Should the modern missionaries also propitiate and conciliate their contemporary Powers? Would God, "Shang Ti", or the Supreme Ruler, take sides? "We must blame ourselves ... the selfishness and greed of our commerce;

the conditions and selfish policy of so-called Christian nations."¹⁸ "Few methods are more liberating than asking the oppressed about their experience, memory, and vision of their history."¹⁹ Well versed in the *Chinese Classics*, Legge would not find it too difficult to accept the understanding, that "Shang Ti" is said to "love and pity the people" and "to be angry with, and take vengeance upon, tyrants and oppressors".²⁰ He would certainly be able to find out passages in the *Shu King* ("Book of History") and the *Shih King* ("Book of Poetry") to support the idea of "Shang Ti" as God of the oppressed.²¹ But then

¹⁸ Cf. note 5 of this chapter.

¹⁹ Cf. note 4 of this chapter.

²⁰ The idea was advocated by William C. Milne and Robert Morrison in "Some remarks on the Chinese terms to express the deity, selected from the *Indo-Chinese Gleaner*, vol. iii, No. 16, for April, 1821, pp. 97-105." in *The Chinese Repository*, vol. VII (May, 1838-April, 1839), October, 1838, No. 6, article V, p. 319.

²¹ In the *Chinese Classics*, Vol. IV, Part II (1871), pp. 499-503, Legge translated one of the ancient Chinese odes as follow:

- "1. God has reversed [His usual course of procedure],
And the lower people are full of distress.
The words which you utter are not right;
The plans which you form are not far-reaching.
As there are not sages, you think you have no guidance; ...
And I therefore strongly admonish you.
2. Heaven is now sending down calamities;-
Do not be so complacent.
Heaven is now producing such movements;-

-
- Do not be so indifferent.
If your words were harmonies,
The people would become united.
If your words were gentle and kind,
The people would be settled.
5. Heaven is now displaying its anger;-
Do not be either boastful or flattering.
Utterly departing from all propriety of
demeanour, ...
And we dare not examine [into the causes
of their troubles].
The ruin and disorder are exhausting all
their means of living,
And we show no kindness to our multitudes.
6. Heaven enlightens the people, ...
The enlightenment of the people is very
easy.
They have [now] many perversities;-
Do not set up your perversity [before
them]. ...
8. Revere the anger of Heaven, ...
And presume not to drive about [at your
pleasure].
Great Heaven is intelligent.
And is with you in all your goings.
Great Heaven is clear-seeing.
And is with you in your wanderings and
indulgences."

Legge's commentary on this ode read like this:

"The consequence of this unusual course pursued by God is stated in 1.2. *The lower people are His peculiar care*, but it might be supposed, from the condition in which they then were, that they were the objects of this aversion. ... Nothing could be farther from the truth than this ... I believe that correct explanation of the language is what I have given. It prepared the writer's way for all that he had to urge on his associates; - as both he and they believed that *calamities from God were signs of His anger at the remissness of govt., and at crimes, especially of the king.* (cf. p. 499, Emphasis by the present writer.)

can we say that James Legge was a pioneer in the missionary world in the nineteenth century as an advocate for a theology of liberation? The present writer would reply in a negative way but with a certain qualification.

James Legge was not a "liberation theologian" of the nineteenth century as he never developed himself as a systematic theologian in the traditional sense. He did not even have time to develop his own missiology. But he took history seriously, not only Chinese history but history as a totality. He was not only a missionary, a scholar, and a sinologist. He was a very serious historian, as Clae Waltham has noticed.²² He was always willing to revise what he has said or written and he was willing to criticize not only what he saw as defective in Chinese culture but also the misdeeds performed by the Westerners. He always reflected on what the West had done

In the *Chinese Classics*, Vol. III, Part II (1865), pp. 592-593, Legge translated *The Books of Chow*, Book XXVII as follows:

"The multitudes who suffered from the oppressive terrors, and were in danger of being murdered, declared their innocence to Heaven. God surveyed the people ... The great emperor compassionated the innocent multitudes ... and made the oppressors feel the terrors of his majesty ... and the solitary and widows were no more disregarded."

²² Cf. note 146 of Chapter Three.

in China and he had a strong conviction that China would one day stand up again and "take the place it ought to hold among the other great nations of the world".²³ He was a superb example of doing mission in history – without forgetting it or abstracting oneself from it, without believing oneself above it – requires attentiveness, patient learning, and a willingness to listen ..."²⁴ Legge arrived in Malacca in 1839 when the clash between China and Britain began which ended up with the onset of the unequal treaties. He published the first volume of his English translation of the Chinese Classics in 1861 right after another humiliating defeat of China by the Western powers resulting in the Treaty of Tianjin. Before he died in 1897, China suffered one more damaging defeat in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). The crumbling of China, in the eyes of Legge, using a long-term historical perspective, was far from over. Legge understood, and he kept on trying to understand, the Chinese mind as his mission was not only to the East but also increasingly to the West. For the sake of the missionary cause, "we must blame ourselves", uttered Legge in his lecture to his fellow colleagues in Britain. The West had to repent also, as China had to repent and to be "converted" to the

²³ Cf. note 12 of Chapter Two.

²⁴ Cf. note 3 of this chapter.

gospel message. The gospel message had to be enacted not only by the missionaries in concrete deeds, but it also had to be enacted by the so-called Christian nations. He once wrote: "If Mencius' lessons had ruled in the councils of our government and in the various churches of our country we should not have at the present day to deal with the question of Home Rule for Ireland, and with the regeneration and comfortable support of millions of our population."²⁵ The West could always find something valuable from the East. Moreover, in the present context, a new missiological perspective is essential in re-evaluating James Legge's missionary career.

The Need of a New Missiological Perspective

History and historical scrutiny never occur in a vacuum. As time goes by, the 'unfinished encounter' between China and Christianity still continues. China has definitely changed a lot in different aspects since the death of James Legge in 1897.²⁶ The Crown Colony of Hong

²⁵ A note written in 1887 found in the typed manuscripts, "Letters by Legge in Oxford and in Hong Kong", p. 23, in LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 8.

²⁶ For events up to 1987, Bob Whyte's *Unfinished Encounter: China and Christianity* (London: Collins, 1988) provides a general picture with substantial discussion on various topics.

Kong, the mission field of Legge's career and his second home, will be returned to China by the British government in 1997, the year that will mark also the hundredth anniversary of Legge's death. Unfortunately, as mentioned before at the beginning of this thesis, Legge has already been forgotten or distressingly neglected by the people in Hong Kong. Should Legge's lifelong efforts in scholarship, translation, and evangelization be overshadowed in the advance of a new era or should such efforts be reviewed in the light of changing circumstances and a new missiological outlook? This thesis will undoubtedly champion the latter view as an essential task for all who are interested in the future encounter between China and Christianity. But then what are those changing factors in China and what kind of missiological framework should be taken into consideration?

First of all, the general picture of China has been significantly changed over the past hundred years or so. China is now no more ruled by the Manchus and the monarchy has been replaced first by a republican

For events especially after the June 4 massacre in Tiananmen Square, Tony Lambert's *The Resurrection of the Chinese Church* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991), and Edmond Tang and Jean-Paul Wiest (eds.) *The Catholic Church in Modern China* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991) are very helpful sources.

government under the Nationalist Party which was in turn overthrown by the present Communist regime. Bishop Jin Luxian, a prominent leader of the "official" Catholic Church in China, once claimed that China is now 'a liberated country, liberated from the oppression of feudalism and colonialism, but not yet from poverty'.²⁷ Bishop Jin then added the following words to elaborate what he actually wanted to express:

To get rid of poverty and liberated from it, we struggle for modernization. In the history of each modernization effort, there is a crisis, a challenge to traditional values ... China is now facing a crisis. Many Chinese were disappointed by the so-called cultural revolution. ... They feel an emptiness in their hearts.²⁸

So from the aspect of material poverty Bishop Jin turned the issue towards the religious need of the Chinese people and emphasized the search within Christianity for some of the answers to the problems of life.²⁹ To meet such demands, Bishop Jin suggested that the Chinese Church should find a way to inculturate

²⁷ Greetings of Bishop Aloysius Jin Luxian in Marc H. Ellis and Otto Maduro (eds.) *The Future of Liberation Theology: Essays in Honor of Gustavo Gutiérrez* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1989), p. 16.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 16-17.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 17.

Christianity into modern Chinese life.³⁰ Such inculturation, in Bishop Jin's terms, would perhaps consist in a combination of some Chinese tradition, some Marxism Chinese style, and the essence of the message of Christ.³¹ Interestingly enough, he added that China has been politically, but not economically liberated. Therefore the Chinese Church should seek for a Chinese version of a theology of liberation and Chinese Christians should create a theology of liberation for themselves.³² Having said that, Bishop Jin also stresses that China has changed and is still changing. He even points out that the influence of Confucianism on the mainland of China has been replaced by Marxism.³³ So in the end Bishop Jin actually leaves us with some acute problems: should Marxism Chinese style be treated as the fundamental element for the inculturation of Christianity into modern Chinese life? What sort of Chinese tradition should be combined with it? What would be the essence of the message of Christ in relation to this combination?

Under the present communist regime, the Chinese Church (both Protestant and Catholic) has been advocating

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., pp. 17-18.

³³ Ibid., p. 17.

the "three-self" principle, self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating. One might notice that such principles had already been upheld by certain nineteenth century Western Protestant missionaries and their colleagues.³⁴ Notable examples include James Legge and his co-pastor of the Union Chapel, Ho Tsun-sheen. However, both Legge and Ho represent a type of evangelist who always show deep understanding and appreciation of traditional Chinese culture. In their days the dominant system of thought in Chinese society was Confucianism. James Legge even dared to alienate himself from his contemporary missionaries to campaign for the idea that Confucianism is not antagonistic to Christianity. For him, the Shang-ti of the Chinese Classics is the true God and Confucius was raised up by God for the instruction of the Chinese people.³⁵ The Chinese tradition could not from Legge's view point be separated by the spread of the gospel. The "national distinctives" are something essential for the inculturation of Christianity in

³⁴ The origins of the "three-self" idea can be traced back to Henry Venn (1796-1873) of the Church Missionary Society and Rufus Anderson (1796-1880) of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Cf. David J. Bosch, *Witness To The World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective* (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1980), p. 152 and Bob Whyte, *Unfinished Encounter*, p. 126.

³⁵ Legge, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity" (1877), pp. 3 and 9.

Legge's eyes.³⁶ Legge, would probably have named those "national distinctives" as Confucianism, the Chinese Classics and other texts of the Chinese traditional wisdom, Qu Yuan and other "heroes" in Chinese history, the Chinese literary masterpieces and the like. Even his close friend, Hung Jen-kan of the Taiping movement, when facing the dread of execution, looked to the person of Wen T'ien-hsiang (1236-1282) of the Sung dynasty for some sort of spiritual consolation.³⁷ Hung Jen-kan, a distinguished Christian who fought for the liberation of his fellow countrymen, had his spiritual roots deeply planted in the Chinese cultural heritage with the combination of his own Christian conviction. Therefore one might argue that the inculturation of Christianity has to be taken seriously with the existing Chinese cultural legacy. Professor Andrew F. Walls has wisely proposed that the real test of theological authenticity is perhaps be the capacity to incorporate the history of

³⁶ The term "national distinctives" is derived from Andrew F. Walls' article, "The Translation Principle in Christian History", p. 25, in Philip C. Stine (ed.) *Bible Translation and the Spread of the Church*. The "national distinctives" are the things that mark out each nation. They are the shared consciousness and shared traditions, and shared mental processes and patterns of relationship.

³⁷ Cf. note 98 of Chapter Four.

Israel as God's people and to treat it as one's own.³⁸ One might also extend this by saying that the history of Israel and God's people is primarily the history of God's active liberation through his own people. The gospel of liberation, authentic or integral liberation, must not then be separated from the process of inculturation or vice versa.

With regard to the gospel of liberation, Mary Motte of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary feels that we are obliged to write a new missiology as we enter the final decade of the twentieth century.³⁹ She aptly observe that a gradual evolution over the past twenty-five years has reached a level of demarcation with past understandings. Summarizing the development in missiological thinking within the Roman Catholic Church since Vatican II and the Latin American bishops' conference at Medellin in 1968, Motte concluded that if "mission is to be a credible Gospel witness, then it must begin with the experience of the poor". In other words, a preferential option for the poor shifted the focus of mission to a new place, namely, the place of the poor, not only for Latin America but

³⁸ Andrew F. Walls, "The Gospel as the Prisoner and Liberator of Culture", *Missionalia*, 10(3), 1982, p. 103.

³⁹ Mary Motte, "Mission in the 1990s: Two Views. II. Mary Motte, F.M.M.", *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, July 1990 (14:3), p. 102.

eventually for the whole world.⁴⁰ Mary Motte then suggests that "the poor exist in the most critical space of creation", "the place where structural sinfulness builds up forces of oppression and violence that deprive the poor of their human dignity." While the poor are those who offer us the starting point for mission, they are also in need of conversion. "But the issue of conversion cannot be addressed apart from that of structural sin". Mary Motte goes on to remind all those who "are persons at the service of universal mission" that their task "is to be at the service of the poor and to discover in their midst their partners in dialogue". The task will involve the pain of rediscovering human dignity in the midst of oppression and violence.⁴¹

) Though Mary Motte's call for a new missiology may not be a direct response to Bishop Jin's appeal for a Chinese version of a theology of liberation, the common theme related to the issues of poverty and oppression between them should not be overlooked. However, Bishop Jin's concept of "liberation" still requires further scrutiny from the latest development of missiology. A leading Asian theologian once defined a missionary as "any one who increases by participation the

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 102 and 105.

concretization of the love of God in history",⁴² The basic task of a missionary cannot be detached from concrete actions of charity and service among the poor, the needy, and the marginalized ones within the human family. Furthermore, someone who did increase by participation the concretization of God's love in history in laying their lives for the oppressed remain as vivid examples of genuine disciples of Jesus. Jon Sobrino, the Salvadorean liberation theologian and the sole survivor of the Jesuit community that were martyred on November 16, 1989, paid tribute to their concretized participation with the following words:

Jesus was martyred because he helped the poor, the widows, those possessed by devils ... We are martyred when we behave like Jesus ... [Martyrdom] transforms the church in El Salvador from something that comes from Europe into something that springs out of the Salvadorean soil.⁴³

What causes martyrdom? If we behave like Jesus then we will be martyred or persecuted, what would be the implications of such martyrdom in relation to Christian missions in China? Could such missiological outlook shed

⁴² Kosuke Koyama, *Water Buffalo Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1974), p. 220.

⁴³ Quoted by Margaret Hebblethwaite in her article, "A Drama of Martyrdom", *Tablet* (November 25, 1989), p. 1390.

new light on the study of James Legge? Perhaps one should look deeper into the subject concerning both inculturation, liberation and conversion.

Inculturation, Liberation and Conversion

Aloysius Pieris, a Sri Lankan Jesuit and also a well-known Asian theologian, boldly asserts that the Christian churches in Asia have not yet really become churches of Asia. As he observes that the authentic, deep-reaching process of inculturation by which Western Christianity becomes Asian Christianity has not taken place has been due to the excess or misdirected stress that the churches have placed on inculturation itself!⁴⁴ The formula for remedy, in Pieris' words, would be "by identifying with Asian peoples in their struggle for justice - as that struggle is nourished by their traditional religions." Thus inculturation cannot be separated from liberation.⁴⁵ Aloysius Pieris points out that the efforts made by the so-called "missionaries" towards evangelization must not ignore the religious ethos of their potential converts. Rather than wiping

⁴⁴ Aloysius Pieris, *An Asian Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1988), pp. 36-38.

⁴⁵ Paul F. Knitter, "Foreword", in Aloysius Pieris' *An Asian Theology of Liberation*, xiii.

away their non-Christian cultural heritage and "religiousness", missionary efforts should be directed to discern the liberative elements in all the existing religious traditions.⁴⁶

Another modern expert on missionary efforts and inculturation, C.M. Feil, describes how a missionary must undergo a threefold process when exercising a transcultural ministry.⁴⁷ First, that person must attempt to become one of the indigenous population by learning the language, history, culture, and religious values of the people. James Legge definitely serves as one of the best examples in this category. Second, that person must also live and grow with his people, and must absorb their mentality and insert them into the society and the local church. One could probably trace such efforts in the career of Legge and in some if not most of his co-agents in scholarship, translation, and evangelization. Third, that person must attempt to discern the evils in society

⁴⁶ In Aloysius Pieris' words, "... To evangelize in Asia ... is to evoke in the poor this liberative dimension of Asian religiousness, Christian and non-Christian ... that the theologians are awakened into the liberative dimension of poverty and the poor are conscientized into the liberative potentialities of their religiousness", cf. *An Asian Theology of Liberation*, p. 41.

⁴⁷ C.M. Feil, "Mission (New Trends)", *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XVII, pp. 419-422, cf. especially p. 422.

(the writer emphasizes this point as the prophetic role of the missionary), and together with the local church to correct them. The public-spirited Legge can once again be seen as a telling example under this heading. Feil also adds that the missionary will not be able to find the correct solution without becoming integrated into the social milieu and seeing the gospel through the eyes of one's people without the encumbrance of one's own cultural background. This threefold process, according to Feil, constitutes "an ongoing conversion (metanoia) essential to any effective missionary effort".⁴⁸ Inculturation, in shorter terms, also involves the continuous process of conversion of the evangelist himself (or herself).

2 When Pieris talks about inculturation and liberation, he does not neglect the significant process of conversion. To him, a Third World hermeneutic vivifies the Christian kerygma by recharging the three key words around which it revolves: *basileia* (the kingdom, or new order), *metanoia* (interior conversion to that order), *martyria* (overt commitment to it).⁴⁹ *Metanoia* is the disturbance of heart and change of life evoked by the mysticism of the intimate encounter with the Ultimate

⁴⁸ C. M. Feil, *ibid.*, p. 421.

⁴⁹ Aloysius Pieris, *ibid.*, p. 109.

Reality. It is a religiously motivated desire and decision to move toward the new humanity, some sort of a "cultural revolution" if one feels allergic to the term "religious conversion". *Martyria*, then, is the concomitant growth of a collective testimony in the communities of converts, a personalized anticipation and a visible guarantee of the new order.⁵⁰ To put Legge and his fellow Chinese colleagues in the light of such a understanding of conversion, Hung Jen-kan and Wang Tao stand out as distinct personalities who tried to translate their personal convictions into concrete "praxis" in challenging the existing reality, either to reform the present order or to transform, or even to revolutionize it. To them, "conversion" would mean something like "cultural regeneration" if not a "cultural revolution".⁵¹ Hung and Wang seem to have never despised their own cultural heritage, but the conversion process was definitely going on in their minds, in their hearts, and also in their actions. Hung could well be seen as a genuine and profound Christian martyr in his time. To him, inculturation and liberation just could not be

⁵⁰ Aloysius Pieris, *ibid.*, p. 110.

⁵¹ In Hung Jen-kan's terms, "cultural regeneration" would mean "enlightenment by culture", in his Tzu-cheng hsin-pien, cf. Franz Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents*, Vol. III, pp. 754-756.

separated. He served his own people and prepared himself to face execution with dignity and principle.⁵²

Moreover, while Bishop Jin emphasizes the aspect of economic poverty when he claims that China has been politically liberated; the disturbing June 4 massacre in Beijing reminds us that China has not yet been genuinely liberated. Oppressive political structures still exist and we can keep on hearing voices calling for basic human rights, freedom, and justice within China. After the June 4 massacre, persecution continues and both Catholic and Protestant church groups have suffered.⁵³ If inculturation has to take root in China, what price has to be paid? While foreign missionaries are not allowed in mainland Chinese any more, what should be the standpoint of the Chinese Christians? In the old days, missionaries may have failed to recognize their own cultural partiality and declared all heathen value-systems as worthless. Now that the Chinese Christians have to stand on their own, what should be the relevant gospel message to their fellow citizens? Can they act as prophets for their own people? In the words of a Philippine theologian, Lode L. Wostyn, the prophets serve as interpreters of the times.

⁵² Cf. note 98 of Chapter Four.

⁵³ Tony Lambert, *The Resurrection of the Chinese Church*, chapter 13, "The Church after the Beijing massacre", pp. 214-259.

They are the conscientizers of their fellow inauthentic and alienated human beings.⁵⁴ Their call to conversion is a revolutionary one since it is a call not simply to an "interim", "individualistic" faith but to a political faith. They themselves do not translate this faith directly into political strategies, yet such a translation in other social and political conditions is certainly not excluded. They have to translate Jesus' political practice for today by engaging themselves in the process of liberation from every oppressive structure, and also the reclaiming of the human being.⁵⁵ As Gutierrez has pointed out, conversion means a break with sin, which will have both a personal and a social dimension. It also means a break with the social milieu to which we belong.⁵⁶ In other words, Christian faith does not encourage one to sit back and relax and just conform to the status quo. That evangelization is the proclamation of the total liberation in Christ, and not a mere verbal announcement becomes crucial in our understanding of mission. The gospel of Jesus Christ is liberating since that liberation includes a

⁵⁴ Lode L. Wostyn, *Exodus Towards the Kingdom* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1986), p. 81.

⁵⁵ Lode L. Wostyn, *ibid.*, pp. 81 and 89.

⁵⁶ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *We Drink from Our Own Wells* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1984), pp. 98-99.

transformation of the concrete historical and political conditions that men and women live in. Christianity thus become subversive in the eyes of the powerful and dangerous for those who have dedicated their lives to the poor, to the oppressed, to those who are voiceless as they are the ones who has been silenced by any tyrannical regimes.⁵⁷

If inculturation is not just an intellectual exercise or an academic game but involves the one's whole being among the masses, especially the poor and the suffering ones, then the consequences could most probably be lethal to the evangelist. That is exactly why Sobrino says that "we are martyred when we behave like Jesus". Or in Gutierrez's expression, Christians are persecuted simply because they believe in a God of liberation as they denounce injustice done to the poor and become involved in the lives of the struggles of the poor.⁵⁸ We have to learn to see the great events of the history of the world (one might add in the events of one's own cultural tradition) from beneath, from the viewpoint of the useless, the suspect, the abused, the powerless, the oppressed, the despised, or in a word, from the viewpoint

⁵⁷ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *The Power of the Poor in History* (London: SCM Press, 1983), pp. 69 and 88.

⁵⁸ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *ibid.*, p. 88.

of the suffering.⁵⁹ Perhaps such a perspective was already taken at least once by Legge when he lectured at the City Hall of Hong Kong way back in 1873. Lecturing on "Two Heroes of Chinese History", Legge saw the figures of Duke Huan and his chief helper Guan Zhong in the state of Qi of the seventh century B.C. of the Spring and Autumn period as "heroes" comparable to those he read from the writings of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) in Scotland.⁶⁰ Legge described the state of Qi under Duke Huan (who reigned from 685-643 B.C.) and Guan Zhong as one which had become "the asylum of the fugitive and the helper of the weak and oppressed".⁶¹ In Guan's life history, through his service, one can find a certain amount of benevolence, "for thereby some relief might be secured from the encroachments and disorders where were everywhere rife" at that era. Such relief could also be secured from the oppression of the weak by the strong, and from the general misery of the suffering people in those days.⁶² Legge also talked about the articles of the covenant established by Duke Huan. Article three reads like this: "Respect the old, and be kind to the young. Be

⁵⁹ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *ibid.*, pp. 204 and 230ff.

⁶⁰ Legge, "Two Heroes of Chinese History", *China Review* 1:6, pp. 31ff. Cf. note 149 of Chapter Three.

⁶¹ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 374.

⁶² Legge, *ibid.*

not forgetful of strangers and travellers".⁶³ Legge did not quote any specific scriptural passage to comment on this article but one might suspect he certainly tried to impress his audience with similar biblical social teachings in his mind.⁶⁴ Inculturation, to a certain extent, cannot be separated from liberation in Legge's missionary career. He loved the Chinese people. He loved their history and their cultural heritage. The heroes in Chinese history could also be enlightening figures for the people in the West, especially those who cared for the oppressed and protected the weak. The message of Jesus Christ is always addressed to the people who suffer. One can even say that Legge's translation of the Chinese Classics and other literature actually serve the purpose of discerning the liberative elements preserved in the ancient Chinese tradition. It is only possible to re-discover these treasures through a penetrating process of translation. One might just wonder whether Legge was eventually converted to Chinese traditional wisdom himself while at the same time discerning the liberating message of the gospel in his venture of translating all these ancient texts. He utterly followed the line that

⁶³ Legge, *ibid.*, p. 376.

⁶⁴ The biblical passages would certainly include *Exodus* xxii. 21, xxiii. 9; *Leviticus* xix. 33; *Deuteronomy* x. 19, xxiv. 17, xxvii. 19.

"the Word can be effectively proclaimed only upon condition that evangelization is preceded by a thoroughgoing comprehension, immersion into, and adoption of the culture itself by those who are to proclaim the Word.⁶⁵

Bénézet Bujo also states that missionaries must stop behaving like neo-colonist bosses from an African point of view. Missionaries must not be oppressors but liberators who would bring good news to the people. Furthermore, if they are to win a welcome for their message they must study deeply the culture of their new homeland and seek a truly fraternal relationship with the local people.⁶⁶ Legge himself studied Chinese culture deeply and his friendships with Ho Tsun-sheen, Hung Jen-kan, and Wang Tao were all lifelong ones. Such friendships perhaps reflect the understanding of conversion by José Comblin. He notices that the process of conversion applies to both the missionaries and the interlocutors. The process takes place on a human level

⁶⁵ J.A. Tetlow, "Inculturation, theological", *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XVII, p. 290. In this article Tetlow suggests that "inculturation" usually suggests that every culture owns true and beautiful religious elements before the word is proclaimed within it.

⁶⁶ Bénézet Bujo, *African Theology in Its Social Context* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1992), p. 111.

where people divest themselves of their cultural certainties and their security systems and approach each other as human beings.⁶⁷ Thus through the process of conversion not only can human relationships be built up, but a dialogue can take place with all the cultures of the world and with all the cultures of the world and with the milieu of science and technology, argues Vincent Donovan.⁶⁸ We must be open to conversion, and a conversion to a fuller truth. If we are not open to conversion, then the process we are involved in is not one of evangelization but of proselytism. If we are not open to conversion, Donovan declares, then we have no right to enter into true religious dialogue.⁶⁹ Obviously we could observe that Legge has tried his very best to enter into dialogue with Chinese culture while his Chinese companions were definitely breaking new ground in the milieu of Western science, technology, politics, and economics. The process of conversion continues perhaps up to the present day in a hidden way.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ José Comblin, *The Meaning of Mission* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1979), p. 79.

⁶⁸ Vincent Donovan, *The Church in the Midst of Creation* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1989), p. 116.

⁶⁹ Vincent Donovan, *ibid.*

⁷⁰ Chinese Christian intellectuals, including Dr. Sun Yat-sen, have been "translating" western ideas into the Chinese situation in the past century. Dr. Sun Yat-sen once met Wang Tao in 1894. Sun wanted to

The Strength and Limitation of Legge's Mission

Legge's lifelong efforts in his Chinese scholarship, his monumental translations of the classical texts of ancient Chinese wisdom, and his missionary ideals were all closely linked together. From a modern missiological aspect, one would be inclined to say that Legge was one of the pioneers in inculturating Christianity in China. What are the strength and limitations of Legge's nineteenth century Protestant missionary-sinologue as China has changed so drastically for the past decades? Will Legge's efforts still be relevant to the contemporary scene in China? What sort of questions from the inspiration of Legge's life and works should we keep in mind in the unfinished encounter between China and Christianity? Or how should the translation principle be put into "praxis" for the present day Chinese Christians?

present a memorandum to Li Hung-chang. He stopped at Shanghai and made the acquaintance of Wang who helped him put the memorandum into acceptable form and agreed to write a letter of introduction to a member of Li's staff. Cf. Paul A. Cohen, *Between Tradition and Modernity*, p. 3.

A thorough discussion on Chinese Christian intellectuals and modern China can be found in Ng Lee-ming (Wu Liming), *Jidujiao yu Zhongguo shehui bianqian* (*Christianity and Social Change in China*), Hong Kong: Chinese Christian Literature Council, 1981.

The strength of Legge's endeavour can be seen in his sympathetic appreciation and understanding of the Chinese tradition. A kind of historical consciousness has probably enabled him to recognize the need to understand the past of China in order to bring the nation to the gospel message. However, when his translations of the Chinese Classics were published in the later half of the nineteenth century, the tide of Western Imperialism and Colonialism had reached an unprecedented height.⁷¹ The glory and prestige of ancient Chinese wisdom gradually became an object of academic study rather than a treasure to be embraced by the missionaries. When Legge died in 1897, China had suffered another humiliating defeat by

⁷¹ David Edginton, *Christians and Colour in Britain* (London: Scripture Union, 1970), pp. 22-23, points out that the people of Victorian England certainly had no doubts in their minds about the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon races. Britain was seen as the most righteous and therefore the most prosperous nation while Europe was possibly a little lower down the scale. The people of Africa and Asia were definitely inferior than people with white skins. As the Victorian era corresponded with the great period of missionary endeavour, many missionaries went out to other parts of the world to influence other people to take up the British way of life. Another powerful factor influencing Victorian ideas about racial superiority was the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859.

Cf. Stephen Neill, *History of Christian Missions*, pp. 274ff., that the heyday of Colonialism, 1858-1914, could be related to some key events which included the second war of the European powers with China.

her neighbour in the Far East, Japan. Tradition, for a while, lost its appeal not only to the western missionaries but also to the Chinese common folk and even the intellectuals of the Middle Kingdom. Sinology could not save a declining empire while the ideas of "revolution", "reform", and "modernization" were advancing again through the efforts of western missionaries. Names like John Fryer (1839-1928), Young J. Allen (1836-1907), and Timothy Richard (1845-1919) appear again and again in modern literature on the history of the late Qing dynasty.⁷² Legge's reputation, though he remains the leading European sinologist of his day, is limited to a narrower scope of sinology. His outstanding scholarship in Chinese studies has been detached from his missionary ideals in the eyes of modern missiologists. From time to time, he has been remembered as a devoted missionary or as a great scholar. But only at the close of the twentieth century, has a revival of interest at Legge's contribution in terms of missiology been raised.

⁷² Books like Jonathan Spence's *The China Helpers: Western Advisers in China, 1620-1920* (London: Bodley Head, 1969), or *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 10, Late Ch'ing 1800-1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978) edited by Dennis Twitchett and John King Fairbank, all lay stress on the impact of these later generation of missionaries.

Legge's scholarship has its own limitations when we see it from a modern missiological perspective. Though Legge himself has realized that the role of the missionary should not merely be to reform but also to revolutionize a people's religion, in the end he failed to translate the traditional dimension of liberation of the ancient Chinese wisdom into the modern situation. Bénézet Bujo argues for the African scene that "to restore the liberating dimension of African religion, we need to rediscover some basic elements which have been buried under the combined weight of colonialism, missionary proselytism and modern technical culture." Bujo points out that the African theologian who wishes to confront the modern challenge must be prepared to call into question the whole of his or her foreign education, and seek to construct a truly incarnated Christianity which will take equally into account both the old tradition and the demands of the modern situation.⁷³ In Legge's case, his shortcoming would be his failure to assess fully the effects of the Western domination of China in terms of military advance and technological superiority. Nevertheless, one may defend Legge by arguing that he could have done very little to stop the

⁷³ Bénézet Bujo, *African Theology in its Social Context*, p. 130.

advance of Western domination. One can even argue that Legge's legacy should be seen exactly as one of the victims who have been buried under "the combined weight of colonialism missionary proselytism and modern technical culture" mentioned by Bujo. The challenge of the "modern situation" needs to be reviewed from an even broader perspective in terms of the panoramic comprehension of the development of the entire humankind. Legge, as a man of his time, would find it extremely difficult to grasp the influence of western mastery in relation to future missionary work in the non-western world. Moreover, Legge ~~has~~ always spoke against the opium trade, the presumed superiority of European culture and other misdeeds performed by his fellow countrymen and colleagues. For him, the crisis of "modernization" was perhaps just a little too far away. ✓

The legacy of Legge did not leave a significant line of missionary approach among the Chinese Christians. Perhaps one of the reasons why Legge's legacy has been obliterated in the Chinese Christian tradition is due to the lack of the "fourth-self" factor in mission in the terms of David Bosch's analysis. The "fourth-self", along with the "three-selves", is self-theologizing.⁷⁴ The

⁷⁴ David J. Bosch, "Mission in the 1990s: Three Views. II. David J. Bosch", *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, October, 1990 (14:4), p. 150.

process of self-theologizing and the commitment to it can well lead to fatal consequences. The most obvious example among the distinguished Chinese Christians in the nineteenth century, I would suggest, is the Shield King of the Taiping Movement, Hung Jen-kan. The premature death, or the martyrdom, of Hung Jen-kan was not only a tragedy in relation to the revolutionary movement itself, but also a severe blow to the future development of an indigenous Chinese theology which could take equally into account both the ancient Chinese tradition and the demands of the modern situation. The brutal suppression of the movement by the Manchus with the apparent aid of the superior western military powers, which Legge definitely opposed, ended any hope of a spontaneous development of an indigenous Chinese Christianity. Hung Jen-kan and his companions were executed as rebels and the movement was labelled as a rebellion. Hung was seldom commemorated by his fellow Chinese Christians as a pioneer in the process of indigenization (or

Bosch relates the fourth "self", *self-theologizing* with the theme of "inculturation", which represents the second important model of contextual theology in his understanding. The theme of "*liberation*" constitutes the first and best-known model of contextual theology in our own time. Bosch even stresses that "the Gospel is foreign to every culture, and likewise, inculturation is never a completed process". "Theology is always theology in the making, in the process of being contextualized and inculturated."

inculturation) on Chinese soil. The imperial history, the official and dominant view, has helped to obliterate Hung's name in the Chinese Christian heritage. While Dr. Sun Yat-sen, ironically a baptized Christian himself and a one time student in the Central School founded by Legge, is remembered by all Chinese as the father of modern China, few Chinese Christians dare to pay tribute to Hung Jen-kan as his mission was crushed by the Qing government. Should we then admit that political success in some way leads to the recognition of a person's thought and contributions? In this respect one should still give credit to James Legge. Eight years after the execution of Hung Jen-kan, Legge publicly honoured him as "the most genial and versatile Chinese I have ever known, and of whom I can never think but with esteem and regret"! ⁷⁵ I would be tempted to say that both Legge and Hung were buried not just under the combined weight of colonialism and modern technical culture but also under the oppressive forces of political might which will try to crush any voice calling for an authentic liberation of the oppressed. ⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Cf. note 110 of Chapter Four.

⁷⁶ Clodovis Boff's words, that "how many movements have there been in history, inspired by justice, that have been buried forever, erased from human history" (*Salvation and Liberation*, p. 89), quoted already in note 114 of Chapter Four, echoes here once again.

Anyway, the demands of the modern situation are still here as a present challenge to the Chinese Christians. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Bishop Jin Luxian reminds us that the crisis facing China today also relates to the continuous struggle for modernization, which always involves a challenge to traditional values. The official policy under the present Communist regime points towards the "Four Modernizations" as the guiding agenda for the development of the nation before the beginning of the 21 century. The "Four Modernizations" stand for modernization of agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology.⁷⁷ Despite the propagation of

Leonardo Boff, in his doctoral thesis for the University of Munich which was published in Germany in 1972 as *Die Kirche als Sakrament in Horizont de Welterfahrung* (*The Church as Sacrament from the Point of View of Secular Expansion*), concludes that the church should liberate man from modern ideologies by promoting a vision of an absolute future – the *Kingdom of God* that is *Revolutionary and Utopian*, and requires that the *Christian be a Rebel and Nonconformist* (pp. 529-534, emphasis by the present writer). Cf. Paul E. Sigmund, *Liberation Theology at the Crossroads: Democracy or Revolution* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 80.

Ironically, Legge came from a *Nonconformist* church background and Hung was actually executed as a "rebel".

⁷⁷ Han Minzhu (ed.) *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 14 note 13. In 1975, at the First Session

the "Four Cardinal Principles" (i.e. adherence to the socialist path, upholding the leadership of the Communist Party, upholding Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse-tung Thought, and the people's democratic dictatorship) throughout the era of the leadership of Deng Xianping (born 1904),⁷⁸ people in China have been calling for the "Fifth

of the Fourth National People's Congress, Premier Zhou Enlai (1898-1976) announced China's agenda for the next years: the "Four Modernizations".

⁷⁸ The ideological framework defining the limits of dissent during the Deng era has been the "Four Cardinal Principles" (also known as the "Four Upholds"). In March 1979 speech attacking the activists of the Democracy Wall Movement in which he first laid down the "Four Cardinal Principles", Deng asserted that these were the basic prerequisite for achieving modernization. Since their introduction, the Four Cardinal Principles have become an ideological strait jacket restricting free and candid debate over the merits of socialism. Cf. Han Minzhu (ed.), *Cries for Democracy*, p. 162.

Modernization" - democracy and human rights⁷⁹ - which ultimately led to the June 4 event that shocked the world in 1989. Here, once again, the irony of history re-surfaces. The leading advocate of the "Fifth Modernization", Wei Jingsheng (born 1951), after imprisonment for over 14 years,⁸⁰ has looked back to the

⁷⁹ At the start of 1989, there was a signature campaign generated by the Chinese intellectuals calling for the release of Wei Jingsheng and other political prisoners jailed a decade earlier for their involvement in the 1978-1979 Democracy Wall Movement, Wei Jingsheng was the author of several famous Democracy writings, including "The Fifth Modernization - Democracy" and "Do We Want Democracy or Do We Want Dictatorship?". In these wall-posters Wei maintained that China could not enter the modern era without a fifth modernization - democracy and human rights. Wei even accused Deng of being an autocratic ruler no different from Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung, 1893-1976). Cf. Han Minzhu (ed.), *ibid.*, p. 23. See also David S.G. Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices: The Poetry and Politics of China's Democracy Movement* (London and Boston: Marion Boyars, 1981), pp. 5-7, 36, 95, 106, 147-149.

C.S. Song, in his *The Compassionate God*, "Chapter Eleven: The Fifth Modernization", looked at Wei's effort from a contextual theological point of view.

"The mission of Democracy Wall! Christians inside China, and particularly those outside, should be able to see it as a great monument to the whole of humanity. On trial at that wall was no less than the ruling power of the communist party in China. Also on trial is the dictatorial power wielded by oppressive rulers in many nations of our world. In this trial God comes very close to the heart of humanity." (p. 227)

⁸⁰ Wei Jingsheng has been released in mid-September 1993. The East Asia editor of *The Times* newspaper,

Confucian principles of benevolence and tolerance for the future development of Chinese culture.⁸¹ During the 1979 democracy movement that ended with Wei's arrest and sentence, some writers made very strong affirmation of their own Chinese cultural heritage and spoke strongly against "cultural despotism" upheld by the Gang of Four. Later this group was also condemned by the official Party leadership for their ultra leftist and violent political standpoint.⁸² The Gang of Four includes Mao Tse-tung's third wife Jiang Qing, 1914-1991, who received a suspended death sentence after their downfall. The magazine *Today* has claimed that itself "is rooted in the ancient fertile land of the past and in the belief that we would live and die for it." The magazine called for

Jonathan Mirsky, wrote: "In a transparent effort to secure the Olympic Games in 2000, Peking has released Wei Jingsheng, its most famous political prisoner", *The Times*, September 15, 1993, p. 11.

⁸¹ While Wei was still in prison, he continued to write extremely long letters to the leaders of the Chinese government. In an article written by Hu Juren, "Du Wei Jingsheng Yu-zhong-shu You Gan" ("Reflection on reading Wei Jingsheng's *Letters in Prison*") in *Pai Shing Semi-monthly News*, Vol. 32, December 1, 1993, p. 62, the author is amazed that Wei mentioned many times in his writings on the Confucian tradition of Chinese humanitarianism. Such tradition, in Wei's eyes, should be the foundation of a democratic political system in China. In a way Wei's words echo with the thoughts of Wang Tao and most probably would get the approval of James Legge.

⁸² David S.G. Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices*, pp. 10 and 163.

the people never to take a narrow view of thousands of years of cultural heritage like the Gang of Four but to use a broader perspective to survey the surrounding horizons, to discover their own value and thereby avoid ridiculous conceit or deplorable self-defeat.⁸³ Years later, at the Tiananmen Square, while students were asking for more democracy, voices calling for "cultural regeneration" could also be heard.⁸⁴ Historical irony continues here. Hung Jen-kan, in his heyday, called for "enlightenment by culture" and "rule by law" to reform the decaying nation but ended with his own execution as a rebel by the ruling class. The democratic movements in modern China were also suppressed brutally. Wei Jingsheng

⁸³ David S.G. Goodman, *ibid.*, p. 163.

⁸⁴ In an essay written on a banner posted at Tiananmen Square entitled "Its about Time, My Fellow Chinese" (dated May 25, 1989), a student wrote as follows:

"... Under the authoritarian system, the leaden weights of totalitarian politics and an unfree economy have suppressed the talents and wisdom of this most gifted people in the world. Mired in this stagnation, our nation becomes poorer and more backward with each passing day. China can be saved only if our political system is fundamentally transformed. Only democracy can save China. Our ancestors missed many opportunities for cultural regeneration. We cannot afford to miss another such opportunity ..."

Cf. Han Minzhu (ed.), *Cries for Democracy*, p. 291. Emphasis by the present writer.

was sentenced to a fifteen-year imprisonment on the charge of being a counter-revolutionary.⁸⁵ The crack down on the democratic movement in China in 1989 was seen by the political leadership as the putting down of "a counter-revolutionary rebellion".⁸⁶ Clodovis Boff's words

⁸⁵ Wei was sentenced to a fifteen-year imprisonment and deprived of his rights as a citizen for eighteen years, cf. David S.G. Goodman, *ibid.*, pp. 36 and 148. He received the charges of being a "counter-revolutionary" and "revealing state secrets to foreigners" probably because of writing such words:

Do not believe in the 'stability and unity' of the dictators.

Fascist totalitarianism can only bring us disaster.

Do not harbor any more illusions about them.

Democracy is our only hope.

(Cf. Han Minzhu (ed.), *ibid.*, p. 129.)

Is Deng Xiaoping worthy of the people's trust?

Does Deng Xiaoping want democracy? ... No, he does not ...

The people must maintain vigilance lest Deng Xiaoping becomes a dictator.

(Cf. David S.G. Goodman, *ibid.*, p. 106 and 124 note 5. The original was the wall-poster, "Do We Want Democracy or Do We Want Dictatorship?", dated March 24, 1979.)

⁸⁶ In "Deng Xiaoping's Remarks to Martial Law Officers on June 9", Deng's emphasis laid on that "we are putting down a counter-revolutionary rebellion", cf. Han Minzhu (ed.), *ibid.*, p. 371. The editor's comment follows on p. 372:

"no more serious charge against the Democracy Movement could be made; counter-revolution is the Chinese Communist ideology's equivalent of sedition, punishable by death under Chinese criminal law. By so labelling the pro-democracy

echo in our ears again, that an authentic, just, popular movement may be crushed, but it preserves its weight and keeps its value beyond history.⁸⁷

To conclude, Legge's line of study stood for tradition but it seems to have lost its ground under the impact of Western colonialism and technical superiority and the confrontation with modernization. Legge's approach should not, however, be seen as a cause lost for ever when we look at the current situation closely. While Marxism once served as the panacea for modern China in the twentieth century, more and more people now begin to look for traditional values like Wei Jingsheng for

protests, Deng and the Party signalled their intention to deal harshly with democracy activists."

⁸⁷ *The International Herald Tribune*, on June 5, 1990, quoted a passage from *The Straits Times*:

"What is significant about the events of June 4, 1989, is not the number of people killed, nor even the number of those involved in the protests. The cardinal principle which was crushed was the Communist Party's very legitimacy, its right to define the meaning of contemporary China, a right derived from the Party's vanguard role as the vehicle of modern Chinese history. June 4, 1989, was in act the beginning of another revolution. There is no break here, only a profound and irresistible continuity. ... The future belongs to those who hope. It always does."

cultural regeneration or even for the answer to modernization.⁸⁸ Moreover, the renewal of the interest in the study of Legge probably could lead to more fruitful discovery in the field of missiology. At the end of the day, Legge has to be criticised for not developing a kind of "fourth-self" among his Chinese co-workers. He tried but failed to reach the standard set by later theologians in the non-western world. As a man of his time, his genuine understanding of the revealing Chinese cultural heritage should not be overlooked even though he has his own limitations.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ William G. Garrett, in a post-June 4 article, stressed that it would be a significant error to discount the roles of Confucianism and Taoism especially in assessing the state of religious affairs in contemporary China. He also observed that the current Chinese political crisis must be a cause for anxiety among the reigning leadership because of the government's loss of legitimacy among members of the body politic. In the terms of classical Confucian teaching, the Mandate of Heaven has been withdrawn from the ruling party officials. Garrett then concluded that we should expect Confucianism as an ethic informing social relations to maintain a very strong influence. Cf. William G. Garrett, "Religion in China", *The Christian Century* (August 16-23, 1989), pp. 748-749.

⁸⁹ The present writer has been wondering that the interests of Legge on Chinese folk "heroes" actually can serve as a solid base for the development of a contextual theology. Like Qu Yuan, the author of the Li Sao poem, he represented a tradition of patriotic literature in China. According to Han Minzhu (ed.) *Cries for Democracy*, p. 47, China possesses a long tradition of poetry writing that stretches from the ancient *Shih King* to the many contemporary poetry

magazines. Poetry in post-1949 China has been the domain of an extremely wide range of people, from workers to generals to statesmen. Part of the function of poetry, in one traditional view, is to offer social criticism – to reveal the grievances of the people, and to remonstrate with their rulers.

Cf. David S.G. Goodman, *Beijing Street Voices*, p. 17, that poetry has in fact been an integral part of the Democracy Movement's activities. Poetry, in Goodman's eyes, is both more popular in China than in the West, and also traditionally more political. Petitioners to the Emperor might couch their requests in poetry. Furthermore, besides the element of nationalistic feelings in poetry, one might also recall that in *Shih King*, the ancient classical odes present an image of "Shang-Ti" that would "love and pity the people" and "to be angry with, and take vengeance upon, tyrants and oppressors". The ancient classical odes provide a strong argument for a Chinese version of liberation theology. "Shang-Ti" could be seen as "God of the oppressed" in the Chinese cultural heritage through such classical literature. Therefore, Legge himself has laid down a concrete foundation for Chinese Christians in the direction of "self-theologizing". What remains to be done would be that Chinese Christians have to dig deep to find out these treasures.

CONCLUSION

History, Translation and Liberation

The gospel message centres around the story of Jesus. The story of Jesus has to be told again and again in specific circumstances, within the context of culture-specific humanity. It must be contemplated and translated appropriately through the efforts of its hearers to reach the minds of all humankind. Bénézet Bujo points out that the history of the Crucified One must be subversive for the customs and practices of both traditional and modern Africa as the gospel of liberation is being translated in the African setting.¹ The process of translation, in other world, leads one to reflect and rediscover one's own history and tradition. Bujo indicates that if one wishes to establish the reign of Christ in Africa, one has to start from the most basic elements of black culture in order to revitalize modern life. The impact of a truly inculturated Christianity has to be made plainly manifest to the Africans who have been and are still prey to injustice, disease and other social evils.²

¹ Bénézet Bujo, *African Theology in Its Social Context*, p.90.

² Ibid., p.11-2.

Lode L. Wostyn, speaking from the Asian situation, emphasizes that liberation has to free the consciousness of people and to introduce a new cultural ethos in which people, as a community, will again be the subjects of their history and the creators of a new society.³ Therefore liberation must be a cultural liberation, and it involves a historical-cultural reading of the situation. Such a reading will mean the study of the praxis of the people as a whole and this will deal with the total historical praxis of a people, including its faith, its past history, its culture, its Christian and other religious traditions.⁴ James Legge indeed ventured along this path and laid the foundation for others to follow. Now is the time for Chinese Christians to step into Legge's course and carry on the unfinished process of translation. However, they will have to do it with a more acute awareness of the challenge of the modern situation, especially under the impact of Marxist-Lennist-Mao Tse-tung thought. Chinese Christians, like their brothers and sisters in other parts of the non-western world, will have to take up the task of translating the gospel message in their own cultural forms. Chinese Christians will be required to read and

³ Lode L. Wostyn, *Exodus Towards the Kingdom*, p.70.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.51.

re-read their own history, to examine and re-examine their own culture, to interpret and re-interpret their Christian as well as their Chinese religious traditions, so as to restore the liberating dimension of their own tradition and to re-affirm their own cultural heritage.

What then should be the proper course for the future encounter between China and Christianity? Theological or missiological terms like "accommodation", "adaptation", "indigenization", "inculturation", "liberation" (or "liberative evangelization"), and "translation" all shed insights on the exploration of the subject matter. The long history of Christian missions in China, dating back to the seventh century when the Nestorians arrived at the capital of the Tang dynasty, has to be reviewed from time to time. Moreover, the experiences of the Chinese Christians should not be overlooked. The struggles of the Chinese Christians in different ages should be remembered. Modern day Chinese Christians in fact share a common history with their brothers and sisters in the Tang dynasty, the Yuan dynasty, the Ming dynasty, the Qing dynasty, and in the Nationalist and Communist regimes. They also share the same history with their fellow countrymen. They have to face the same problems that their fellow Chinese have to face. Raymond Fung, the

editor of the book *Households of God on China's Soil*,⁵ speaks about the Chinese Church in this way.

A church dependent on the state reflects either the powerlessness of the powerless, or the power of the powerful. Neither places the church among the people. Neither evangelizes.⁶

I look forward to the day when the church speaks and, powerless as it is, tells not only the stories of Christians, but speaks no less the voice and the hopes of the Chinese people. That would be power indeed, the power of powerlessness, the power of the crucified and risen Christ.⁷

The past history of a people, their voices and their hopes, should be translated through the Christian presence to let the gospel message of liberation of the crucified and risen Christ be known to those who are being oppressed and sinned against. If the church, or the Christian community, does not place herself among the suffering people and speak out for justice on behalf of them, no genuine evangelization can ever take place.

⁵ Raymond Fung (ed.), *Households of God on China's Soil*, (Geneva: WCC, 1982). A telling collection of real life stories of Christians' experiences under Communist rule in China.

⁶ Raymond Fung (ed.), *Evangelistically Yours*, (Geneva: WCC, 1992); p.125.

⁷ Ibid., p.126.

Jens Glebe-Möller, a Danish theologian, describes the significance of "mutual solidarity" when he expounds the concept of "communicative fellowship" in the following way. To Glebe-Möller, ideas about fellowship and solidarity are to be based on showing that solidarity is confronted with a limitation, or a borderline, when it comes to those who died an innocent death before us, all those on whose shoulders we stand. These people include earlier generations of farmers, workers, the victims of the gas chambers, and Jesus himself. We can be in solidarity with them only insofar as we remember them or include them in our thoughts. We can recall or reflect upon their contributions to the general discourse on what human life ought to be.⁸ Glebe-Möller also underlines that Jesus' history is never his private history but always a "shared history", a common history, that Jesus' own way to divinity involves also his contemporary and subsequent disciples' way to divinity. To be offered forgiveness is to gain self-respect, to recover one's identity, and thereby to obtain the opportunity actively to oppression as for sin, in Jesus' perspective, is primarily oppression of others.⁹ The voices for justice, love, peace, freedom, and truth all have to depend on

⁸ Jens Glebe-Möller, *A Political Dogmatic*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987); p.109.

⁹ Ibid., p.90-1.

Christians' standing in the common history of their fellows. There is always "an unavoidable demand on Christians".¹⁰

Glebe-Möller's words clearly echo with those of the French existentialist writer Albert Camus (1913-1960) several decades ago. Speaking to a group of Dominican friars in 1948, Camus expressed his thoughts of what the unbelievers would expect of Christians. This winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1957 said:

... what I feel like telling you today is that the world needs real dialogue ... and that the only possible dialogue is the kind between people who remain what they are and speak their minds. This is tantamount to saying that the world of today needs Christians who remain Christians ...¹¹

... What the world expects of Christians is that Christians should speak out, loud and clear ... The grouping we need is a grouping of men resolved to speak out and to pay up personally. When a Spanish bishop blesses political executions, he ceases to be a bishop or a Christian or even a man; he is a dog, just like the one who, backed by an ideology, orders that execution without doing the dirty work himself. We are still waiting, and I am waiting, for a grouping of all those who refuse

¹⁰ Ibid., p.116ff.

¹¹ Albert Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion and Death*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961). The quotations are from the fragments of a statement made at the Dominican Monastery of Latour-Maubourg in 1948, "The Unbeliever and Christians", cf. p.70.

to be dogs and are resolved to pay the price that must be paid so that man can be something more than a dog ...¹²

... Perhaps we cannot prevent this world from being a world in which children are tortured. But we can reduce the number of tortured children. And if you don't help us, who else in the world can help us do this? ...¹³

... And what I know — which sometimes creates a deep longing in time — is that if Christians made up their minds to it, millions of voices — millions, I say — throughout the world would be added to the appeal of a handful of isolated individuals who, without any sort of affiliation, today intercede almost everywhere and ceaselessly for children and for men.¹⁴

[Here ends the Lesson!]

The voices of Christians, millions of voices, are still awaited by all those who suffer, who are hungry, thirsty, naked, homeless, persecuted, imprisoned, oppressed; by all those who are desperately longing for an authentic liberation.

"Mutual solidarity" means that while Christians today are still keeping themselves busy in translating the gospel message into different languages and dialects,

¹² Ibid., p.71-2.

¹³ Ibid., p.73.

¹⁴ Ibid., p.74.

the effort of remembering, especially remembering all "those who died an innocent death before us", "all those on whose shoulders we stand", should be re-emphasized. In translating the Chinese classical texts, the ancient historical records of China, James Legge has reminded us about the virtues of the "heroes" who served their own people by laying down their lives. Qu Yuan and his poems remain as the outstanding example in this category. The present Chinese Christians , if they welcome and celebrate the success of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, should not close their eyes on what was done by Hung Jen-kan, and on the most recent democratic movements that happened around them. They have to look back at their own history, take their own cultural heritage seriously. They have to write, and re-write, a history of their own. As suggested by Enrique Dussel in his Latin American setting, one must start over and try to work up a historical self-awareness that will redefine us in genetic terms, if we want to undertake critical thinking and engage in authentic historicity, if we want to "historify" what we have at hand and turn it into real history.¹⁵ Dussel describes that history is a collective psychoanalysis of our culture. When we want to know about the traumas we carry

¹⁵ Enrique Dussel, *History and the Theology of Liberation*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1976); p.15.

inside ourselves, we turn to the history of ourselves. Thus history is a collective psychoanalysis in which we examine our cultural traumas and our failures at adaptation.¹⁶ History, in this way, can help us to "see" the process at work and the very act of seeing what has been going is a major part of the cure. We see the real situation that we are in and we now know why we are in it.¹⁷ Chinese Christians suffered as the traumatic experience of the June 4 massacre was shared between them and their fellow Chinese. After the 1989 incident that centred around Tiananmen Square, how should Chinese Christians respond to the challenge and translate the gospel message in a concrete way? Perhaps, as Camus declares, a price has to be paid. China is still waiting, and hopefully she has the patience to keep on waiting for a grouping who will be willing to speak out loud and clear for her children. The gospel message must be translated into concrete praxis so as to actualize the Kingdom of God, and to re-enact the story of Jesus which reveals to us his own translation of divinity into culture-specific humanity in a concrete way.

The principal task of the present-day Chinese Christians should not be limited to the literal

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

translation of the gospel message or to one's own classical literature. The translation process, in its fullest sense, should lead all those persons involved into a continuous process of conversion, revision, and transformation. Going through such process, undoubtedly one will look at one's own tradition and one's own history (as well as the common history with others) critically. A continuous revision and re-interpretation of one's own tradition will be necessary so as to enable the translation of the liberating dimension of one's cultural heritage to become possible. Such efforts of translation will then transform one's own cultural heritage and historical tradition into liberative forces to "revolutionize"¹⁸ the present reality into a more humane society as well as a more godlike one! But then a price has to be paid while we dare to remember, to recall and to reflect on those "who died an innocent death before us". To remember them or to include them in our thoughts will sometimes lead to political persecution or racial harassment and the like. To speak out for the "non-persons" will almost certainly lead to the loss of

¹⁸ "Revolutionize" is the term deliberately used by James Legge in his 1877 paper, "Confucianism in Relation to Christianity", cf. Chapter Four, note 111.

our own privileges or material advantages. Should we change sides?

We Must Dig Our Own Wells

"It is our past which tells us who we are, without our past we are lost."¹⁹

"Perhaps the real test of theological authenticity is the capacity to incorporate the history of Israel of God's people and to treat it as one's own."²⁰

"In times of national crisis, you cannot simply keep repeating that you are a Christian and forget about history. You cannot hide in a 'Christianity' that will exempt you from the obligation of being a citizen of your country."²¹

"... there should be lessons of the greatest value to be learned from the study of Chinese history ... We cannot know humanity as we ought to do, as in those days we feel that we must do, without it."²²

19 Andrew F. Walls, "The Gospel as the Prisoner and Liberator of Culture", *Missionalia*, 10(3), 1982, p.103.

20 Ibid., p.105.

21 Jon Sobrino, *Archbishop Romero: Memories and Reflections*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Book, 1990); p.12.

22 James Legge, *Inaugural Lecture* (1876), pp.17-18.

In his work *We Drink From Our Own Wells*, Gustavo Gutiérrez reminds us that our commitment to Christ accompanies and leads our commitment to our neighbours. The context of Latin America, from Gutiérrez point of view, is experienced as one of death-dealing. Our age is one in which the poor are experiencing new hope in their struggles, a new sense of God's presence. We must learn to drink from their wells.²³ What are then the wells for the present-day Chinese Christians to drink from? I would suggest that for Chinese Christians, we need not only just to drink from our own wells but we even have to find and dig our own wells. We have to search for our own spiritual roots to revitalize our Christian faith in order to make this faith relevant to the modern challenge. We have to understand our own history; as Gutiérrez suggests, that history can be known only by transforming it, and by transforming oneself.²⁴ What lies in Gutiérrez's thought is that the praxis which transforms history is the matrix of authentic knowledge and the acid test of the validity of that knowledge. Such praxis is the place where human beings re-create their

²³ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *We Drink From Our Own Wells*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Book, 1984; pp.18-20. Cf. William A. Dryness, *Learning About Theology from the Third World*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1990); p.105.

²⁴ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Book, 1984; p.59.

world and shape themselves, and the place where they know the reality in which they find themselves and know themselves as well.²⁵ For Gutiérrez, re-reading history is not enough; the only significant re-reading involves re-making. Re-reading history means re-making history and it will be a subversive history.²⁶ History must be turned upside-down from the bottom, not from the top. What is criminal is not to be subversive but to continue being "supervisory", i.e. bolstering and supporting the prevailing domination. It is in this subversive history that we can have a new faith experience, a new spirituality, a new proclamation of the gospel²⁷ which embraces a collective and popular spiritual experience.²⁸

Within the Chinese Christian circle in Hong Kong, few people in the past talked about history. The June 4 event in 1989 and the daunting issue of 1997 contribute to a new kind of "Chinese consciousness" which can be seen as essential for the process of self-theologizing in the present writer's viewpoint. To see oneself as both a Chinese and a Christian and to face up to the crisis of the nation, one cannot forget history. As Jon Sobrino

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid., p.21, cf. pp.201-2.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid., p.208.

warns us, if the church commits the sin of abandoning the people, she will be "historically marginalized".²⁹ It will not be easy to describe what "Chinese consciousness" really is.³⁰ Perhaps it could be related to the "national distinctives" mentioned by Andrew F. Walls in discussing about the translation principle.³¹ The best illustration is the enthusiastic support of the 1989 Chinese democracy movement shown by the people in Hong Kong who have been ruled by the British Government for one and a half centuries.³² Many Christians were actively involved in

29 Jon Sobrino, op. cit., p.137.

30 I use the term "Chinese Consciousness" by borrowing the idea of "Black Consciousness" in Alan Boesak's discussion on Black Theology and the Africanization of Christianity, see his work *Black Theology Black Power*, (Oxford: Mowbrays, 1978); especially pp.138-142.

31 Andrew F. Walls, "The Translation Principle in Christian History", in Philip C. Stine (ed.) *Bible Translation and the Spread of the Church*, p.25. The "national distinctives" are the things that mark out each nation. They are the shared consciousness and shared traditions, and shared mental processes and patterns of relationship.

32 Felix Patrikeeff, *Mouldering Pearl: Hong Kong at the Crossroads*, (Kent: Coronet, 1990); pp.221-3. Patrikeeff describes that the people of Hong Kong had risen to their feet not just in solidarity with the democracy movement in China, but also for the sake of their own future, as over a million people took to the streets on May 28, 1989 to show the support to the movement. Patrikeeff also evaluates such actions as "a reawakening of nationalistic feelings" and "a collective cry from the very soul of a people."

support for the movement and in the protest at its suppression. Certain Christian groups have recently been demanding safeguards for freedom of speech and belief under the future Chinese government.³³ The voice for freedom, justice, democracy, and tolerance could be heard from various Christian communities in Hong Kong, mainly addressing the situation in China in the past few years.

The present writer was involved in a lay leadership training program held by the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong in the spring of 1992.³⁴ During a

Cf. Frank Welsh, *A History of Hong Kong*, (London: Harper Collins, 1993); pp.520-1. Welsh notes that even most Communist institutions in Hong Kong protested against the Chinese government's suppression of the democracy movement by slaughtering their own unarmed people in hundreds, if not in thousands.

- 33 Alan Hunter, "Hong Kong" in Stuart Mews (ed.), *Religion in Politics: a World Guide*, (Essex: Longman, 1989), pp.296-7.

The present writer, while back in Hong Kong during 1990 to 1993, has joined two of these Christians groups, the Hong Kong Christian Institute and the Hong Kong Christian Patriotic Democratic Movement. The Hong Kong Christian Institute was formed in 1988 and the latter group was formed in the heat of that epic event in May, 1989.

- 34 The lay leadership training program being mentioned is called the "Discipleship and Theology Extension Course". The present writer's involvement is being recorded on the "1992 LTS President's Report" of the LTS (*Lutheran Theological Seminary*) *The 16th Graduate Bulletin*, Issue No. 26, Hong Kong, LTS, 1993, p.5. The Report is written in Chinese.

course on the history of Christianity in China, a participant clearly expressed the view that the future of Chinese Christianity could never be separated from the future of the whole nation. If the Chinese Church could not be found among the suffering masses in China, there would be no tomorrow for the Chinese Church. It is quite amazing that lay Christian leaders in Hong Kong have begun their self-theologizing by re-reading their own Christian traditions and taking the history of their own country seriously. The self-realization that came from the linking of the history of Chinese Christianity with the history of the whole Chinese people would be a significant step for the "fourth-self" in terms of Chinese missions in China.

"China is where our roots are. From the point of view of our religion, God made us Chinese and a commitment to China's suffering is our duty."³⁵

"To map out our future path is to share China's commitment."³⁶

35 Lo Lung-kwong, "Hong Kong People are Subjects, not Objects" in Cheng, Y.S. (ed.), *Hong Kong: In Search of a Future*, (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1984); p.158.

36 Ibid.

Rev. Dr. Lo Lung-kwong, who is also a graduate from the Theology Division of Chung Chi College as the present writer, is also an active member of the Hong Kong Christian Patriotic Democratic Movement.

Such proclamations by a new generation of Hong Kong Chinese Christian leaders show signs of hope for the future of Chinese Christianity. Another prominent Chinese Christian leader, Zhao Fusan, who defected to the West in protest of the brutal suppression of the democracy movement in 1989 by the present Communist regime,³⁷ once said:

... For years, our theology was nothing more than a poor repetition of western theology. ... We were not sufficiently wrought up by the love of Christ to identify ourselves with our people and to seek for their true welfare. ... We did not weep with them that wept in old China, neither do we rejoice with them that rejoice in the new. We seem to have become pitiful strangers in our own country and among our own people.³⁸

Zhao's reflections signal the urgent need of identifying one's Christian faith with the fate of China. In the past, foreign Christian missionaries were

37 Professor Zhao Fusan, with an Anglican background, being a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Deputy Secretary-General of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and a high-ranking leader in the Three Self Patriotic Movement of China, disappeared in Paris shortly after giving a speech to UNESCO on June 9, 1989. His defection was publicly announced on June 28. He later declared his opposition to the brutal suppression of the democracy movement. Cf. Tony Lambert, *The Resurrection of the Chinese Church*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1991; p.222.

38 Victor E.W. Hayward, *Christians and China*, (Belfast: Christian Journals Limited, 1974), p.38.

criticized as "the stumbling block to Christianity's becoming really at home in China " since they had "failed to show either sensitivity or appreciation as regards the Chinese way of life."³⁹ The exceptions certainly would include James Legge. When the Chinese Christians have to search, to dig their own wells and drink from them, Legge can be seen as a pioneer in the discovery of the spiritual values in China's religious heritage. Even while serving China as a missionary in the nineteenth century, Legge laid the foundation for the future generations of Chinese Christians to build on. He has already shown present-day Chinese Christians where to find their own wells. His advice for them might be, "Dig deep and drink from your own wells!"

Leonard M. Outerbridge wrote the following words more than half a century after Legge's death:

It is not a matter of strategy or expediency that we should recognize the presence of the living God in China's historic past. This must be recognized as the primal duty of Christian humility and integrity. ... Only when Christians approach China and its cultural past with the same reverence and appreciation of Confucius and Lao Tzu as we have towards Moses and the Hebrew prophets shall we be able to discover the full revelation of God in Jesus. Repeated failure to understand this is responsible for attitudes of superiority which have been resented by the

³⁹ Ibid., p.31.

Chinese throughout the history of Christianity
in China.⁴⁰

Since 1949, foreign missionaries have been kept away from mainland China but both the Protestant and Catholic Chinese Church have grown rapidly.⁴¹ Though the road ahead for Chinese Christians is not an easy one, it is the moment for us to dig deep and drink from our own wells. To translate the gospel message on Chinese soil will be the responsibility of Christians in mainland China, in Hong Kong, and all those who are concerned in other parts of the world. The price has to be paid. The truth, however, will set us free: free from the bondage of any enslaving systems or structures, so that we can serve our fellow Chinese people in the light of the gospel of liberation. So let the process of translation be genuinely and thoroughly carried out among all Chinese Christians in order that the future encounter between China and Christianity may be a truly incarnated one.

⁴⁰ Leonard M. Outerbridge, *The Lost Churches of China*, (Philadelphia: the Westminster Press, 1952); pp.201-3.

⁴¹ Edmond Tang reveals that Protestant Christianity, has increased from an estimated 700,000 in 1949 to the 1993 official figure of 6.5 million or more and unofficial statistics put the figure significantly higher. The Catholic church has also witnessed a substantial growth in the period since the Cultural Revolution. Cf. Edmond Tang, "Contextualization of the Chinese Church", in Edmond Tang and Jean-Paul Wiest (eds.), *The Catholic Church in Modern China*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Book, 1993; p.245.

Then one can be proud of being a Chinese and a Christian at the same time. Chinese Christianity, drawing from her own rich resources preserved in her historic past, could then contribute more fruitfully in the concrete praxis of the gospel message in the wider world community. James Legge once said:

We sometimes doubt if China be really moving, but moving it is; and if I sometimes fret at the slowness of its advance, and wish that they were more in it of the mobility of its neighbour, yet in the end that slowness tends to increase my respect for the country and its people. There must be a great future yet for the country. ... All that will yet come in for the benefit for the world at large ... but I like to see the manifestation of a purpose in China to try and hold its own: she is the gnarled oak, the growth of four millenniums, which will not bend to us...⁴²

And on another occasion, Legge provided the following prophetic utterance:

"... And I may say that the further back one goes, digging among the foundations of Chinese religion, the more does he find that is in harmony with the living oracles of Revelation."⁴³

At the end of the day, this thesis is not just a reflection on the missionary approach of James Legge. As

42 James Legge, "The Colony of Hong Kong", *The China Review* 1:3, p.174.

43 James Legge, "Missionary", LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Box 8, no date, p.11.

the translation process resembles that of conversion, the contemplation of this nineteenth century Scottish Protestant missionary leads one to a very serious call. It is not only a call to remember what James Legge has done for China and her people, but also a call to remember the common (or shared) history of the Chinese people, especially their collective experiences of suffering and oppression. It is also a call to remember, or include all those "who died an innocent death before us" in our thoughts. It is a call to recall or reflect upon "all those on whose shoulders we stand", and to speak out loud and clear, or one may say, to translate, so as to turn into reality the hopes and aspirations of all who are being oppressed, and after all, to be willing to pay up personally on behalf of the voiceless, the powerless, and all those who have always been omitted from the history of the oppressive powers.

APPENDIX I: Public Lectures by James Legge at Oxford

(This list was compiled by James Legge's daughter, Helen Edith Legge, in her letter to Rev. J. Steele dated August 29, 1917. The original letter is now in the LMS Archives, China-Personal Papers - J. Legge, Box 9.)

- 1876 December 7 "Nature and History of the Chinese Written Characters, introductory to the Laws of Chinese Composition"
- 1877 January 31 "Confucius"
- March 15 "Mencius, the philosopher of China"
- May 11 "Imperial Confucianism, part I"
- May 22 "Imperial Confucianism, part II"
- May 29 "Imperial Confucianism, part III"
- Novemeber 28 "Imperial Confucianism, part IV"
- 1878 May 15 "War versus Conference and Covenant, as argued and tried in China, in the 7th century, B.C."
- November 20 "Principles of Composition in Chinese or Grammar without Inflexions, I"
- November 23 "Principles of Composition in Chinese or Grammar without Inflexions, II"
- 1879 May 21 "Ch'in Shih Hwang-Ti, the first Emperor of the Ch'in Dynasty"
- 1880 February 11 "Taoism"
- 1881 May 11 "Yi King, I"
- May 18 "Yi King, II"
- 1882 November 1 "Tao Teh King, I"
- November 4 "Tao Teh King, II"
- 1883 November 7 "Chronology of China, and its History down to the Close of the Feudal Period, I."

- November 14 "Chronology of China, and its History down to the Close of the Feudal Period, II."
- 1884 February 13 "Chou Dynasty, bringing the History down to the Close of the Feudal Period, I."
- February 20 "Chou Dynasty, bringing the History down to the Close of the Feudal Period, II."
- November 12 "History on Ch'in) (Note by H.E.
Dynasty, I.") Legge, "Ill-
) ness, presu-
November 19 "History on Ch'in) mable not
Dynasty, II.") delivered.")
- 1885 November 4 "Fa-hien and his Travel in India with the State of Buddhism in our Fifth Century."
- November 11 "The Rise of the Dynasty of Ch'in and its Superseding of the Feudal State."
- 1888 May 3 "The Nestorian Monument of Hsi-an Fu, relating to the propagation of Christianity in China in the 7th and 8th Centuries."
- November 13 "Taoism, Lao-tsze and Chwang-tsze, I."
- November 20 "Taoism, Lao-tsze and Chwang-tsze, II."
- 1893 May 23 "The Purgatories of Buddhism and Taoism."
- 1894 May 22 "The Li Sao Poem and its Author, I."
- May 29 "The Li Sao Poem and its Author, II."
- 1895 October 21 "Fu-sang. Was it in America and thus that continent discovered by the Chinese more than 1000 years before Columbus?"
- October 28 "Chinese Poetry."
- 1897 March 11 "China before the time of the Emperor Yao"
- October 28 "The Pan family of our 2nd century, especially Pan Chão, the authoress."

November 20 "The first Emperor of the Han dynasty
and the Empress Lü." (Note by H.E.
Legge, announced "necessarily deferred"
and never delivered.)

APPENDIX II: Governors of Hong Kong (1841-1882)

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---|
| Captain Charles Elliot | Administrator | January-August 1842 | |
| Sir Henry Pottinger | Administrator | August 1841-June 1843 | |
| Sir Henry Pottinger | Governor | June 1843-May 1844 | |
| Sir John Davis | Governor | May 1844-March 1848 | |
| Sir George Bonham | Governor | March 1848-April 1854 | |
| Sir John Bowring | Governor | April 1854-May 1859 | |
| Sir Hercules Robinson | Governor | September 1859-March 1865 | |
| William T. Mercer | (Administered) | March 1865-March 1866 | ? |
| Sir Richard Graves MacDonnell | Governor | March 1866-April 1872 | |
| Sir Arthur E. Kennedy | Governor | April 1872-March 1877 | |
| Sir John Pope Hennessy | Governor | April 1877-March 1882 | |

APPENDIX III: The Imperial Dynasties of China

(Pinyin in bracket)

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Hsia (Xia) Dynasty | c.2000-c.1520 B.C. |
| Shang (Shang) Dynasty | c.1520-c.1030 B.C. |
| Chou (Zhou) Dynasty | |
| - Hsi (Western) Chou | c.1030-770 B.C. |
| - Tung (Eastern) Chou | |
| Spring and Autumn Period | 770-476 B.C. |
| - Tung (Eastern) Chou | |
| Warring States Period | 475-221 B.C. |
| Ch'in (Qin) Dynasty | 221-206 B.C. |
| Han (Han) Dynasty | 206 B.C.-A.D. 220 |
| Six Dynasties Period | 220-589 |
| Sui (Sui) Dynasty | 589-618 |
| Tang (Tang) Dynasty | 618-907 |
| Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdom Period | 907-960 |
| Sung (Sung) Dynasty | 960-1279 |
| Yuan (Yuan) Dynasty | 1280-1368 |
| Ming (Ming) Dynasty | 1368-1644 |
| Ching (Qing) Dynasty | 1644-1949 |
| Republic of China | 1912-1949 |
| People's Republic of China | 1949-present |

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- 1859 *The Land of Sinim: A Sermon Preached in the Tabernacle, Moorfields, at the Sixty-fifth Anniversary of the London Missionary Society.* (London: John Snow)
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and the Books of Shang; and the Prolegomena. (Hong Kong)

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* indicates there is a copy of that publication or a later edition of the book in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

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Malacca

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- 1868 edition of *Tsung Choò she chang* Hong Kong [Sinica 1498, Oriental Books, Bodleian]
- 1871 edition of *Tsung Choò she chang* Hong Kong [Sinica 1648]
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- 1865 edition Hong Kong
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- 1862 edition Hong Kong
- 1871 edition Hong Kong [Sinica 1213]
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Ultra-Ganges, China-Malacca, Incoming Letters, Box 3, Folder No. 4, Folder No. 5, 1839-1843.

South China, Incoming Letters, Box 4, Box 5, Box 6, Box 7, 1843-1873.

Various JAMES LEGGE's papers, family letters, sermons, journals, paper-cuttings are also kept in the LMS Archives:

China-Personal Papers, J. Legge, Boxes 4 to 10.

Other miscellaneous papers, journals, letters, lecture notes of JAMES LEGGE and his family are kept in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

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